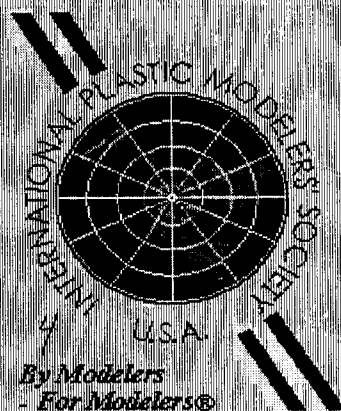
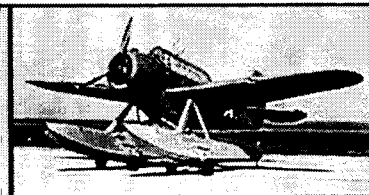


Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS-USA
April 1999

PREZNOTES



As I wake each day I realize that the time I have been on this planet is getting longer than the time I may have remaining. Counting the models that I have finished in the last forty or so years against the number that I have currently unbuilt in my garage leads me to think that I just might not finish them all before I "bite the big one", even if I stopped buying models today (like that's going to happen!). If I could only build models with the frequency of Brian Mulron who always has four or five new models at *every* meeting, I might have a slim chance of cleaning my garage of all those boxes of plastic. Unfortunately, I don't build like Brian...

And I still have a slew of projects to finish: a few (dozen) more B-17's; a display of all the Battle of Midway aircraft types; my "reel" planes movie aircraft collection; a floatplane collection; a non-Luftwaffe Bf 109 collection; a display featuring the Royal Aircraft Establishment Display of Captured Enemy Aircraft, November, 1945; and a few dozen other groups of models that I have been buying kits for, for the last several decades. Of course, if I win the Lotto I could retire, but to win you have to buy Lotto tickets and I tend towards buying the latest model magazines instead. Then again, maybe I shouldn't worry too much about finishing my unbuilt and stay happy with the knowledge that at least I have *plans* to finish them all.

And now for something completely different...**WHY DO I HAVE SO MANY @#&*! Bf 109s ON MY SHELF?????** I mentioned earlier that I was doing a non-Luftwaffe Bf 109 collection. It was not in my plans to do so! I'm not even particularly fond of the aircraft. It started out simple enough with the then-new Hasegawa Bf 109E kit. What a perfect model to do - one of the first captured examples tested by the RAF. Dark Green/Dark Earth with Yellow undersides, no canopy. Totally cool. I bought the model. Put it on the shelf. A 'later' project. Then I found more information on one of the Japanese Bf 109E's. Another Hasegawa kit

on the shelf. Sometime later I found a color photo of a tall tail 109 in British markings. Another kit. Damn. This is getting carried away. An American captured 109. Another kit. Double Damn. Whilst looking at a different project, I found another 109. This time, a captured example of a 109 pieced together from a number of aircraft with different paint and markings on each wing and other parts cobbled on to make a complete, if differently painted example with mostly Luftwaffe camouflage & markings. Moi, build a Bf 109 with German markings? Another trek to the hobby shop. In any event, I now have six or seven Bf 109s on my shelf, almost as many as my collection of B-17 kits. And that's not even counting the Buchons I have! Aarrghh.

Then there are the folks at Tamiya. It's their fault I now have a Dewotine 520 and an F4D Skyray in my collection. Look what else is coming from them, too. Singlehandedly, I think I'm keeping the employee salaries paid at my local hobby emporium as well as the folks at Tamiya!

See you at the meeting

Terry

PS: for our 'Chicago' members - can you use whilst in a sentence?

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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 each month, (see below for actual meeting dates), at the Washington National Guard Armory, off 15th Ave. NW, just to the west side of Queen Anne Hill in Seattle. See the back page for a map. Our meetings begin at 10:00 AM, 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, (or \$18 a year for Internet newsletter only) 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. The IPMS-USA form should return in the next issue. 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. 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 1999 meeting schedule is as follows. To avoid conflicts with previously scheduled IPMS events and National Guard activities at the Armory, please note that some of our meeting days fall on the third Saturday of the month, not the traditional second Saturday. We suggest that you keep this information in a readily accessible place. All meetings begin at 10:00 AM.

APRIL 17, 1999 (3rd Saturday)
JUNE 12, 1999 (2nd Saturday)

MAY 8, 1999 (2nd Saturday)
JULY 10, 1999 (2nd Saturday)

**Leading Edge Models
Update**

by Keith Laird

Leading Edge Models has released decal sheets for four new subjects. With the "Goldilocks Harvards" aerobatic team in 1/72 and 1/48, you can do one complete airplane, but numbers are included for all team aircraft. Another sheet is for a gorgeous all-blue CT-33 for squadron VU-33, Royal Canadian Navy, out of Comox, B.C. This sheet is available in 1/72 and

1/48. The third is an orange and white Noorduyn Norseman flying Ontario bush operations in 1/72, and finally a DC-3 for Buffalo Airways in a very attractive white and green scheme. The DC-3 sheet is available in 1/48, 1/72, and 1/144. All have full-color instructions and a mix chart for what paints to use to match the aircraft, including paint brand names.

Emil at Skyway and Kevin at The Supply Depot both carry these decals.

Leading Edge will be going into injection-molded kits in the near future with the first

kit out by the end of this year. Futures for decals will include more DC-3s, CT-33s, CF-18s, Vietnam Helicopters, PBY Catalina fire bombers and reissues of some past offerings that have been popular.

I talk with the owner of Leading Edge on a regular basis and will be happy to pass along any wants and suggestions.



The Japanese Rocket Fighter Program

by Jim Schubert

Shusui:

The Mitsubishi J8M1 (Navy)/ Ki-200 (Army) Shusui (Rigorous, or swinging, Sword; no Allied [McCoy] code name) was a license-built derivative of the Messerschmitt Me 163 Komet point defense interceptor. The original intent of the Japanese was to simply build the Komet under licenses bought from the Germans. The fortunes of war, however, made that impossible. The Japanese did buy the licenses and the Germans did duly dispatch all the drawings, specifications, etc., and a complete specimen airframe, engines, and systems components to the Japanese in Singapore, aboard two submarines. The sub with the specimen airframe, its systems and some systems components was sunk en route. The other sub, delivering the specimen engine, most of its systems components and drawings, etc., made it.

Rather than abandon the program, the Japanese then decided to design their own "Komet" using the sales presentation materials, given them by the Germans in the course of the license negotiations, to reverse-engineer their own design. This is why the Shusui is noticeably different from the Komet. The resulting airplane was of typical, for the time, frame-and-stringer all metal light alloy construction save for the fabric covered control surfaces. At least five, and perhaps seven, pre-production examples were completed before the end of World War Two:

The J8M1 and Ki-200 were essentially identical save for differences in armament, radios, and color schemes. The Shusui is one of only two cases of which I know, where the IJAAF and IJNAF ordered the same airplane; both services shared a strong dedication to NIH, as our own services still, wastefully, do. *[The other Japanese WW2 aircraft ordered by both services was, interestingly enough, a German design; the Bucker Bu 131B Jungmann primary trainer, license built for the IJNAF as the Kyushu K9W, and for the IJAAF as the Kokusai Ki-86. The Navy also borrowed some Army Ki-46s. - ED]*

Only one virtually complete airframe, an assemblage of components from 403 and 504, survives in Ed Maloney's Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California. A badly battered fuselage (cn unknown) retrieved from a cave assembly hall near Yokosuka is on public display at JASDF Air Base - Gifu. At least six more airframes were in various stages of completion at war's end. The Gifu specimen is probably one of those.

Akikusa:

The Yokosuka MXY8 Akikusa, or Akigusa, (Autumn Grass - no Allied [McCoy] code name) was developed by the IJNAF at their Yokosuka Arsenal, concurrently with Mitsubishi's development of the Shusui, as a trainer for the IJNAF and IJAAF pilots assigned to fly Shusuis. It was of typical wooden glider construction, with a monocoque plywood fuselage and ply-

skinned wooden wings and fin. The control surfaces were fabric covered.

There is a photo in the references of an early Akikusa, post-flight, which has a one-piece curved windscreen and no hood. This would be an interesting variant, possibly a one-off, more like a sport glider, to model.

At least three flight test airframes were built and at least one of them was test flown before the war's end. The water ballasted version was being designed for high speed training, as well as a ducted-fan powered version intended to supplement the Shusui as a fighter.

Modeling the Akikusa:

I know of no kit in any scale for the Akikusa. I built mine in 1/72nd scale by extensively converting an Airfix Me 163B kit. I reduced a side elevation drawing to 1/72nd scale and drew the profile, minus canopy, fin and rudder, and with a cutout for the cockpit, onto a piece of .010" white styrene. This was cut out and glued to one fuselage half. A generic 1940s glider interior, with a big pitch trim wheel on the left, was built and installed in one of the fuselage halves before they were joined. It was then a fairly simple, albeit time-consuming, task to putty the Komet shape out to the white styrene profile of the Akikusa. In some areas, the grey of the Komet had to be trimmed down to the white styrene profile. A lot of refilling, filing, and sanding later, I had a presentable Akikusa fuselage. As the original was a plywood monocoque there are no panel lines to scribe on the fuselage. The fin was cut down from the Airfix outline after removing the rudder. A new rudder was cut from sheet styrene. The wings were sanded free of all panel lines and the ailerons and trimmers were cut out to be replaced with new parts cut from sheet styrene. There are no panel lines on the

- | | |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cn100 | Structural test airframe. |
| cn201 | IJNAF, powered flight test article. Flown once, fatally, July 7, 1945. |
| cn302 | IJAAF, water ballasted for high speed glide tests, summer 1945. |
| cn403 | Reserve airframe for flight test program. |
| cn504 | Reserve airframe for flight test program. |

wing, either; the only such lines are the prominent join lines for the removable wings.

A male canopy mold was carved from wood and a canopy vacuformed over it.

The rest is details. The droppable take-off dolly is from the Airfix Me 163B kit, and the wheels are from the old Hawk, now Testors, 1/72nd scale Ryan NYP *Spirit of St. Louis* kit. My model is overall AeroMaster A/N ID Orange Yellow, #9097, with Hinomarus with white surrounds on the wing tops and bottoms, and on either side of the fuselage aft of the wing. Some photos show the Akikusa with no fuselage insignia, but with a Hinomaru on either side of the fin/ rudder.

The approach to building a 1/72nd scale Akikusa described above could also be easily used in 1/48th scale using the DML (etc.) kit or in 1/32nd scale using the Hasegawa kit.

A 1/72nd scale, plan and left side elevation drawing is included for your convenience.

The Shusui Kits:

Hasegawa Kit No. NCI:1600 (1/72nd scale)

This is a pricey little fellow at \$25 retail. The greatest weight of plastic in the kit box is for a very elaborate, toy-like, trick base. Who needs it? It's a very good \$10 kit. *[Ordering it directly from Japanese mail order firms might ease the pain; at 1600 yen, that's equivalent to about \$13.15 US, plus postage and handling - ED]*

Once past the disgust with the cute base, the kit itself is quite good. Good surface development, fine inscribed panel lines and incuse rivets make life easy. The interior is very basic but usable, especially if you leave the two-part canopy closed. The only serious problem I had was that the root sections of the wing halves, when joined, were a very noticeable few thousandths of an inch deeper than the root stubs on the fuselage. To correct this problem, sand the facing surfaces of the insides of the upper and lower wing halves

by rubbing them on a sheet of sandpaper attached to a flat surface, testing frequently until the depth of the wings at the roots matches the fuselage wing roots in depth. Otherwise, you're in for a lot of heavy filling and filing in a very noticeable area.

The control surfaces and flaps have no representation of the ribs under their fabric covering; nor are there tabs on the elevons and rudder. See my column *Details, Damned Details* in the March 1998 issue of this newsletter for an easy way to do rib tapes in 1/72nd scale.

Decals are provided for cn201 and either 403 or 504. The colors given and their arrangement are subject to a lot of conjecture and dispute. I painted one of mine as cn403 in the Navy blue-green over bare metal scheme, but chose a different separation line than Hasegawa based on my interpretation of the references. I painted my second one overall orange as cn504. For cn201, I tend to buy Scott Hoffman's idea (reference *P*) that it was light olive overall, rather than the generally accepted orange, save for an area around the rocket exhaust.

Conclusion: Pretty good kit. Quite buildable. Outrageously overpriced. The better of the 1/72nd scale kits.

MPM Kit No. 72037 (1/72nd scale)

Typical MPM; mediocre to poor surface development, very rough surfaces requiring overall sanding of all the parts. This sanding will, in many places, obliterate the too finely scribed panel lines. Poor fit. Poor engineering. No locating pegs. Nice, but not really necessary etched brass instrument panel, belts, antenna mast, and rudder bar. The kit is, perhaps, saved by its price of "only" \$16.95; it's a good \$5 kit. (I'm cheap).

Being split horizontally from wingtip to wingtip, there is no wing root-to-wing fit problem as on the Hasegawa kit, but this split resulted in MPM choosing a very awkward fitment of the rear fuselage, and fin and rudder unit, which is split vertically. I thinned out the exhaust area side walls and sandwiched in a length of 1/8" O.D.

aluminum tubing to make sure the exhaust was round and stayed that way. Later this was a handy place to stick a paint brush handle to hold the model while painting it.

This kit does have ribs in the elevons and the trimmer is represented very nicely, but it does not have the ribs represented in the rudder at all. It too has no tabs on the elevons or rudder.

One usable clear vacuformed hood and rear windows unit is provided, in one piece. Unfortunately it has several of those little "pimples," characteristic of European vacuformed parts, in awkward places.

Painting and markings instructions are provided for the same two airplanes as Hasegawa's kit. Unfortunately, the decals provided are only suitable for the 403 or 504 airplanes, as there are no white surrounds to the Hinomarus as there should be for cn201.

This kit's biggest problem is that no landing skid is provided. The skid was extended for take off when the launching dolly was attached. If you want to show your bird ready for take off, or just sitting on the ramp, you'll have to make an extended landing skid and cut out the well for it in the plane's belly. You can't even display it, sans wheels, leaning on one tip after landing, because the skid was extended for landing, in order to bring the spring into play. Bad decision on this item by MPM.

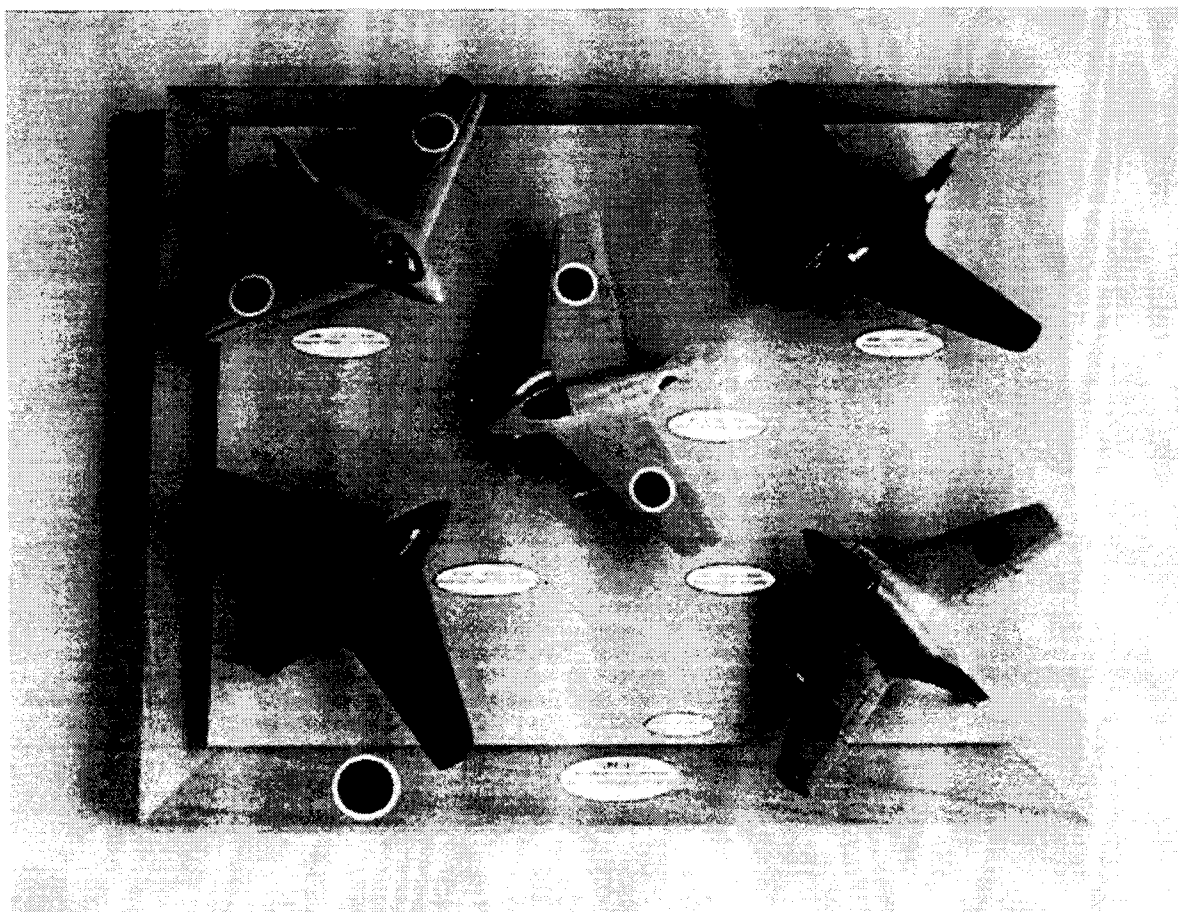
Conclusion: Fair kit. Buildable with difficulty and corrections. Slightly overpriced.

Eagle's Talon Kit No. ET509 (1/48th scale)

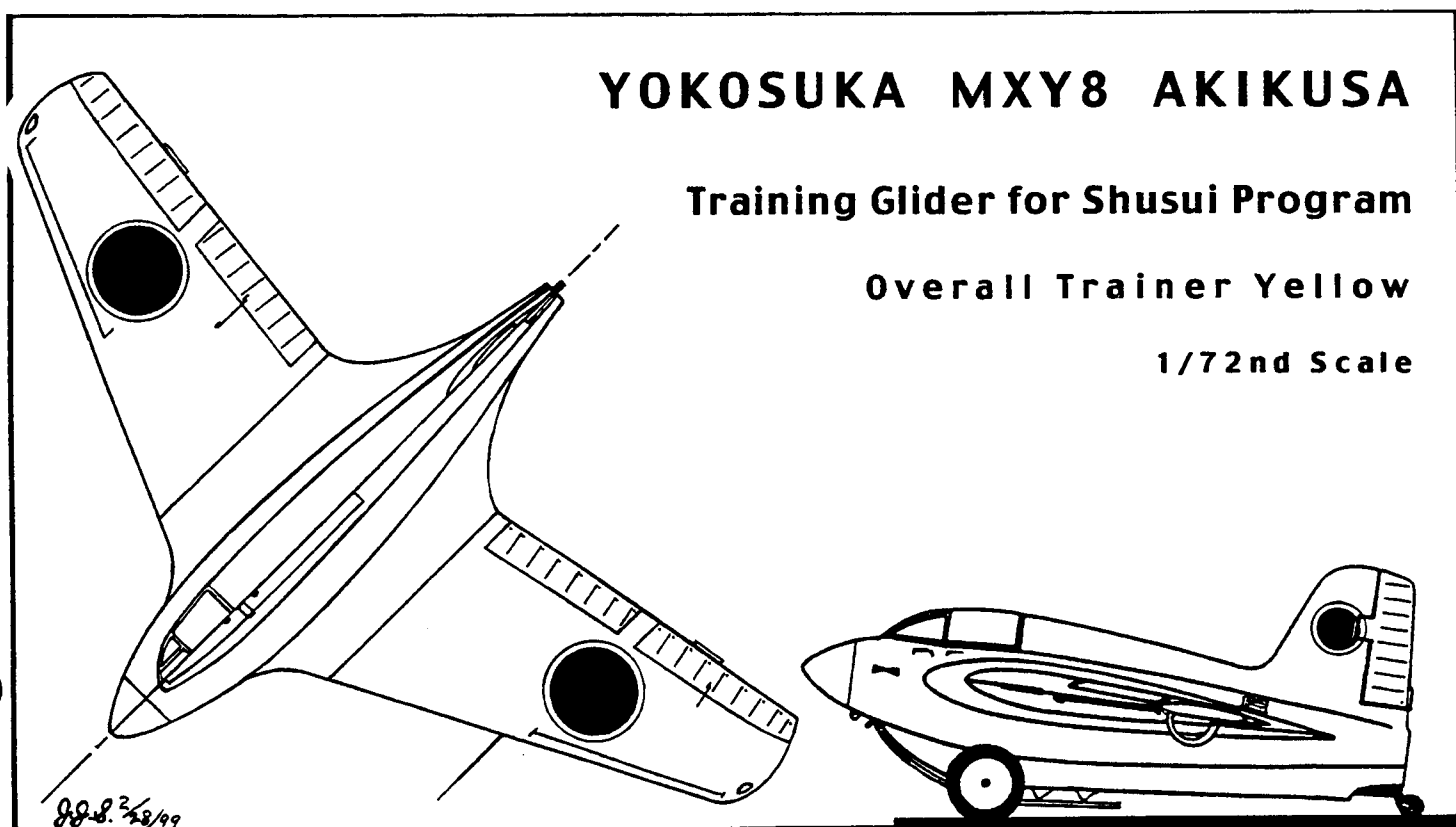
This kit comprises 28 pretty well cast resin parts and a vacuformed clear canopy and rear windows unit. The fuselage/wing is split horizontally; the fin/rudder unit stubs onto a root molded integrally with the upper fuselage/wing half. This is a much neater solution than that chosen by MPM.

The surface development (that's the rendering of the various simple and compound curves as smooth surfaces

flying (stupid Editor!)



*The author's Shusui program collection.
Clockwise from top left: cn201, cn403, cn504, and cn 302*



sans warps, waves, or gratuitous humps or depressions) is quite good. The surface finish is better than MPM's but not as good as Hasegawa's; you'll still have to sand every inch of this one too, and rescribe the already too shallow and faint panel lines that you will have destroyed in the process.

Inevitably this kit will be compared with the Shanghai Dragon, nee Dragon, nee DML, nee Trimaster, kit of the Me 163B. The DML kit is much, much, better, but the Eagle's Talon kit will build into a good companion.

The picture-only instructions imply that you should cut out the rear windows of the vacuformed part and install them separately in the window holes molded in the upper rear deck of the fuselage. I think not. Cut off the resin rear deck containing the rear window holes and fit the canopy/rear windows vacuformed part as one piece, and fill the seam. Much tidier and much easier. If you want the hood open, just separate the hood before installing the vacuformed piece containing the rear windows.

Only very skimpy painting and markings instructions are provided. No decals are included.

Conclusion: A good kit. Very buildable. Won't be embarrassed by comparison with the DML Komet kit. I can't comment on the price/value as mine was given to me and I've never seen one advertised, so I have no idea of the price.

Hasegawa/Fine Molds Kit No. FA015 (1/48th scale)

At the outrageous MSRP of \$88.98 (\$66.75 from mail order discounters) this kit merits neither review nor purchase!

Afterword: Komet Kits

There ~~are~~ ^{is} one Komet kit in 1/100th scale, three kits in 1/72nd scale, two in 1/48th scale, and one in 1/32nd scale known to me. Tamiya made a fairly good 1/100th scale kit which has not been available for many years. If building in 1/72nd, skip the Lindberg (also boxed by Revell Germany)

and Airfix kits in favor of the Heller one. In 1/48th, skip the extremely inaccurate Testors, nee Hawk, kit in favor of the DML (etc.) kit. Hasegawa's is the only model in 1/32nd, and fortunately, it is very good.

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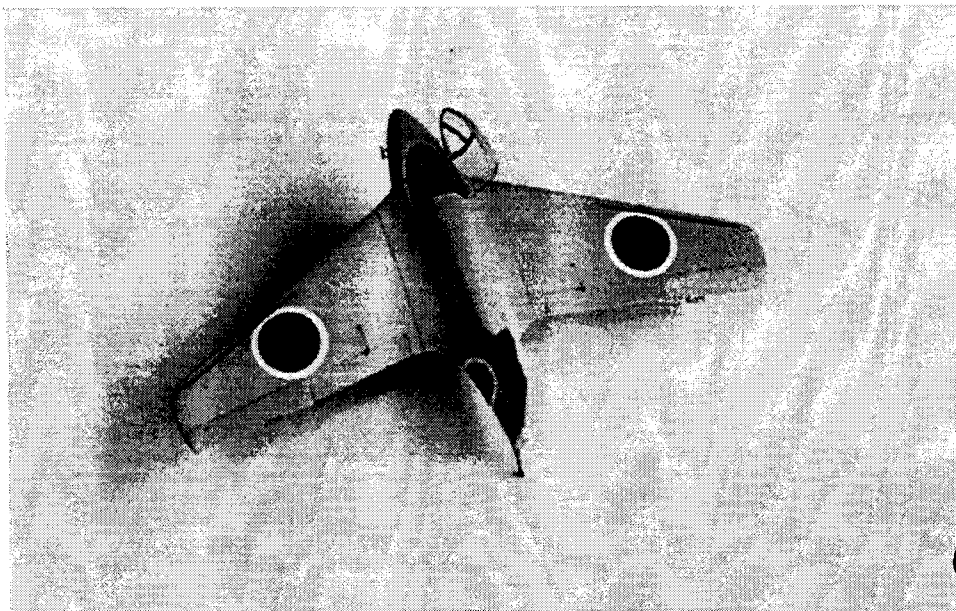
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The author's 1/72nd scale Akikusa converted from the Airfix Me 163B Komet kit.

AML 1/72nd North American O-47A

by Greg Reynolds

I was surprised to receive this kit last month from one of my European trading partners. First, it is from a model company I had not heard of before, and second, it is an obscure subject. Just the sort of thing to pique my interest.

The O-47 began life early in 1935 as the GA-15 of the General Aviation Manufacturing Corporation, division of General Motors, in Dundalk, Maryland. "Dutch" Kindelberger was in charge. In one year, the company emerged from takeovers and mergers as North American Aviation with new manufacturing facilities in Inglewood, California. The GA-15 was accepted by the Air Corp as the OX-47 in January 1936. Production orders for 109 O-47A were placed in August, which was later increased to 164 aircraft. This was shortly followed by an order for 74 O-47Bs with a slightly larger engine.

In 1936, the O-47 was a new concept in observation aircraft for the Army. It was an all-metal monoplane with retractable landing gear, hydraulic flaps, and adjustable propeller. More significantly, it was three-place, having a dedicated observer. The observer could be seated in the long greenhouse canopy between the pilot and rear gunner, or perform his duties from a second seat in the distended belly of the aircraft, with panoramic side windows under the wing roots and windows under his feet. The latter could be opened for a clear view during camera work or for message drops and target towing. Deliveries of the 95 aircraft that went to the Air Corp began in February 1938. The remaining 143 O-47s went to the National Guard, equipping every squadron by 1939. During the war, the O-47 was regarded as too vulnerable for combat, although some were "caught" by the Japanese over the Philippines. Wartime duties included training, towing, and anti-submarine patrols. Although the O-47 was successful in its day, the heavy observation type was a dead end. It was not adaptable to other roles, limiting its

usefulness. Future observation aircraft would all be light liaison aircraft.

AML has all the hallmarks of other limited run Czech kits, such as MPM, Condor, Special Hobby, Model News, Pavla, and so on. It is however, the best of this breed that I've seen to date. There are 49 light gray parts, 6 vacuformed clear parts (including an extra canopy for us goof-ups!), 20+ photo etched parts, a nice decal sheet, and a printed instrument panel. The molding is all very smooth and crisp with fine scribed panel lines. There is plenty of stuff to fill the long greenhouse canopy. I counted over 30 interior parts plus ribbing on the side walls. I'm sure it can be jazzed up, but it sure looks like a great start. The wheel wells and gear door covers are also provided with interior detailing. Accuracy-wise the kit appears to be based on Paul Matt's scale drawings with no noticeable deviations.



The only faults I can find have to do with the engineering of the kit, or rather lack thereof. The biggest headache is the lack of any wing location tabs. The only guidance you have is lining up the observation window cutouts in the wing with those in the fuselage. This doesn't help at all with the dihedral and incidence. Similarly, there are no locating pins for the fuselage halves, wing halves, bulkheads, oil cooler, landing gear doors, retraction struts, exhaust pipe or just about anything else. It all seems rather vague. Careful test fitting, jigging and constant reference to drawings will be essential to put this one together.

Another big pain is the lack of openings in the belly for the camera windows. You have to carve out your own. The clear vac

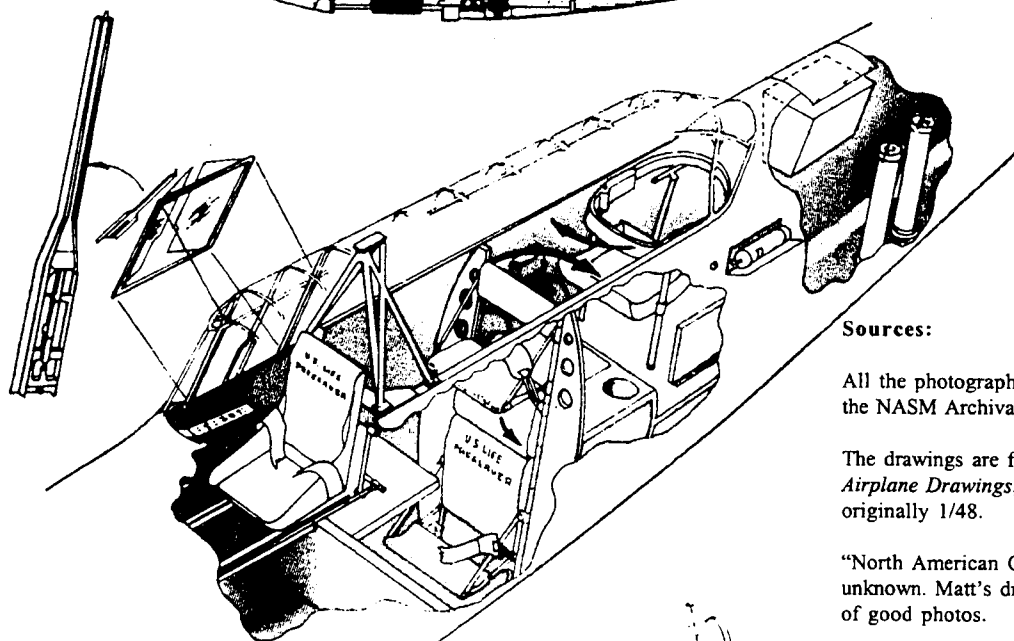
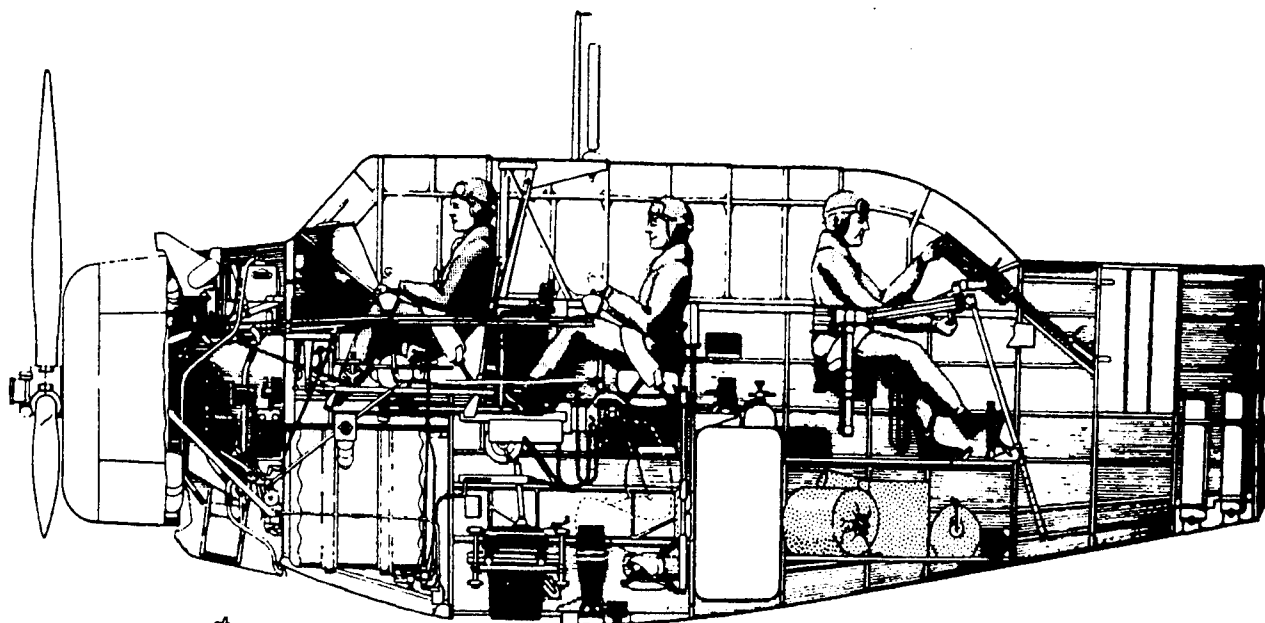
part includes a section of the surrounding metal skin, so you have the option of inseting just the clear windows, or fitting a larger panel and masking off the clear bits. Installing the underwing observation windows looks like a problem as well. The opening in the wing root is very shallow as molded. Photos of the interior show that this portion of the wing root was completely open to the observer's compartment. Hollowing this out on the model will be a challenge. (Or you could just paint it all black inside.)

There are a few other minor complaints. The molded over landing lights in the leading edge of the wing seem odd for a kit with this level of detail. These should be opened up. The end of the prominent exhaust pipe needs some attention as well. It should terminate with an upward facing slot, not a plain cone. The well for the main landing gear brace needs to be partly filled in. It is really just a shallow groove in the underside of the wing, not an opening through the lower skin. I'm not fond of the treatment of the control surfaces. The surface detail makes them look like embossed stiffening ribs in sheet metal, not the fabric covered metal frames which they were.

The Protagteam decals are nicely done, but boring. The markings provided are for a Olive Drab and Neutral Gray scheme from the Philippines. Stenciling and propeller markings are included. It is a pity that markings are not included for some of the more colorful pre-war National Guard units. These aircraft were nearly all highly polished natural metal, but I think the high quality of the molding makes this a real possibility. Other possible color schemes include the chrome yellow and blue XO-47 while it was being tested at Wright Field (some minor conversion required) and temporary "war games" camouflage.

In summary, this kit appears to be very accurate with a high level of detail. The molding is a higher quality than we have seen before from most limited run Czech kits, and it is an appealing, offbeat subject, but the lack of alignment features will make it difficult to build.

North American O-47A

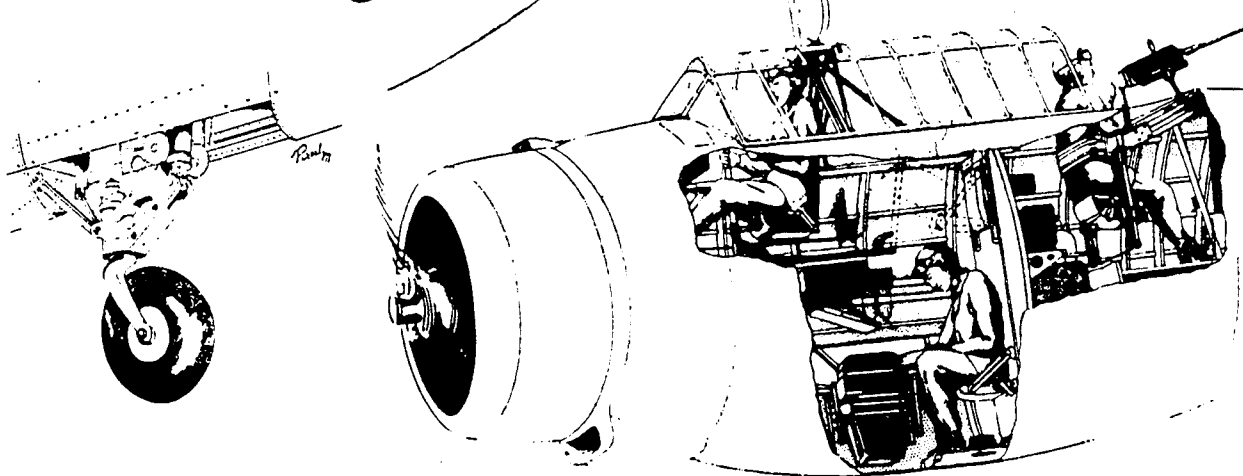


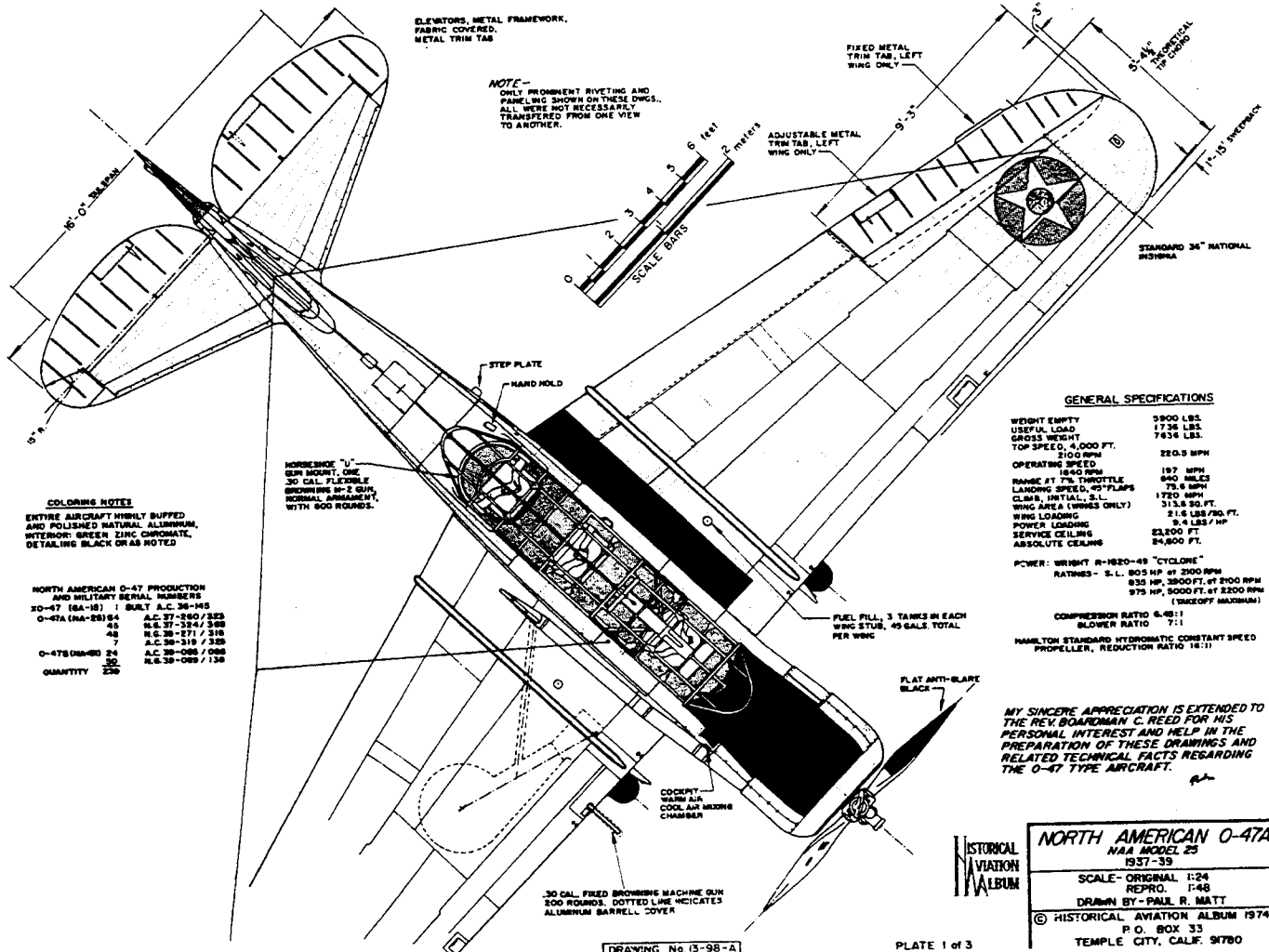
Sources:

All the photographs in this article came from the NASM Archival Video Disc 1 and 2.

The drawings are from Paul Matt's *Scale Airplane Drawings*, Volume 2. They were originally 1/48.

"North American O-47A", *Skyways* issue unknown. Matt's drawings again, two pages of good photos.





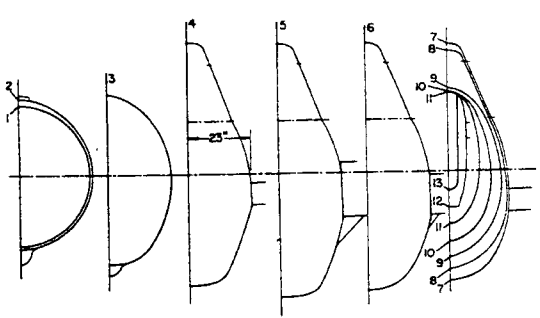
COLORING NOTE
ENTIRE AIRCRAFT WHITELY BUFFED AND POLISHED NATURAL ALUMINUM, INTERIOR GREEN ZINC CHROMATE, DETAILING BLACK ORAS NOTED

NORTH AMERICAN O-47 PRODUCTION AND MILITARY SERIAL NUMBERS

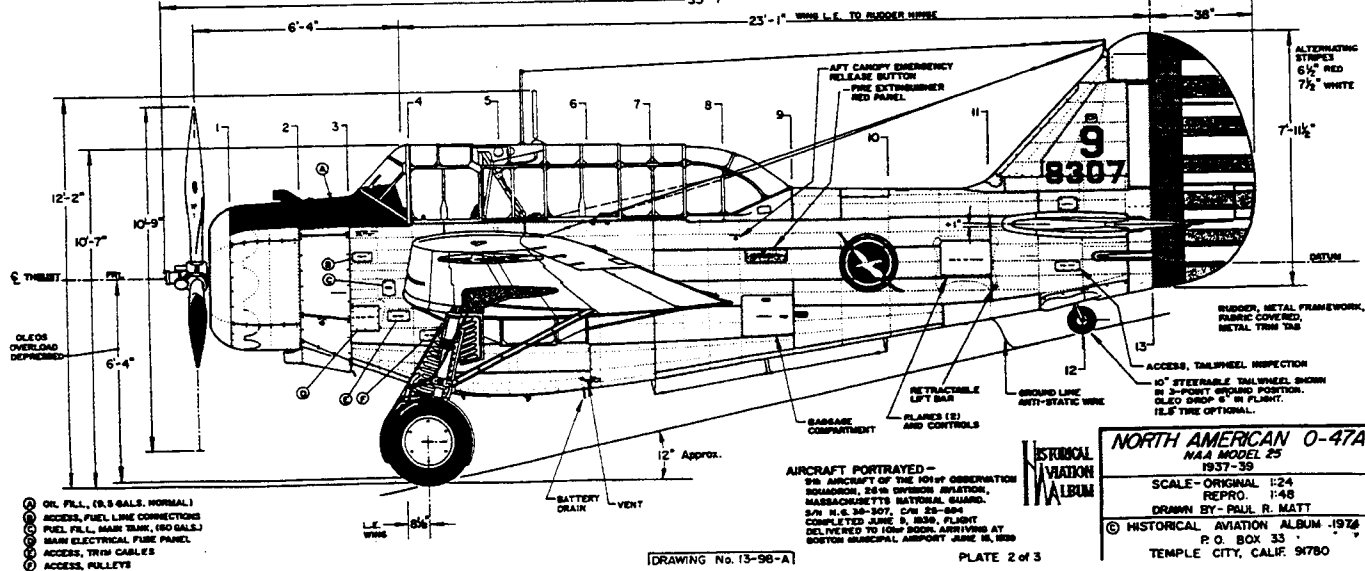
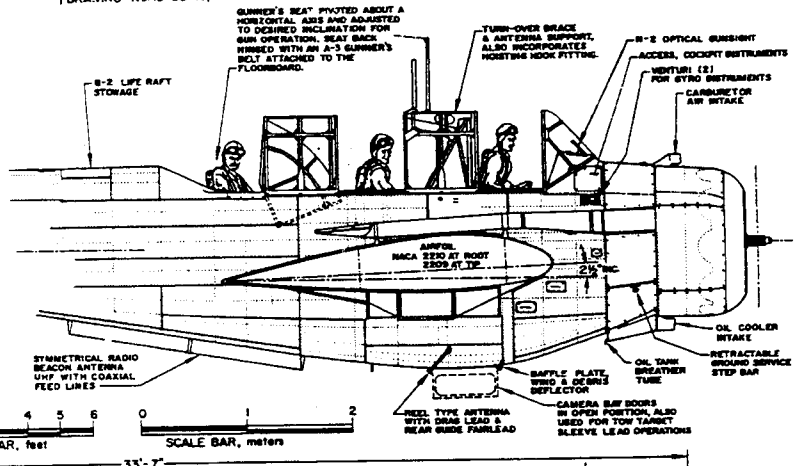
YO-47 (6A-18)	1	BUILT A.C. 38-145
O-47A (NA-851A)	45	A.C. 37-150/323
	46	N.E. 37-154/308
	47	N.E. 38-171/318
	7	A.C. 38-219/338
O-47B (NA-86)	24	A.C. 38-088/088
	25	N.E. 38-089/138
QUANTITY	250	

NORTH AMERICAN O-47A
NAA MODEL 25
1937-39

SCALE - ORIGINAL 1:24
REPRO. 1:48
DRAWN BY - PAUL R. MATT
© HISTORICAL AVIATION ALBUM 1974
P.O. BOX 33
TEMPLE CITY, CALIF. 91780



10th OBSERVATION SQUADRON INSIGNIA
WHITE BULL, RED, BLUE SKY BACKGROUND, ENCLOSED IN A WHITE BAND AND OUTER RING OF LEMON YELLOW.



- ① OIL FILL, (8.5 GALS. NORMAL)
- ② ACCESS, FUEL LINE CONNECTIONS
- ③ FUEL FILL, MAIN TANK, (80 GALS.)
- ④ MAIN ELECTRICAL FUSE PANEL
- ⑤ ACCESS, TRIM CABLES
- ⑥ ACCESS, PULLEYS

AIRCRAFT PORTRAYED -
5th AIRCRAFT OF THE 10th OBSERVATION SQUADRON, 28th DIVISION, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS NATIONAL GUARD.
S/N N.E. 38-307, C/N 28-884
COMPLETED JUNE 9, 1939, FLIGHT DELIVERED TO 10th BDN, ARRIVING AT BOSTON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT JUNE 18, 1939

NORTH AMERICAN O-47A
NAA MODEL 25
1937-39

SCALE - ORIGINAL 1:24
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PM Model Focke-Wulf Ta 183 Hucklebein

by Jacob Russell

The Focke-Wulf Ta 183 Hucklebein was another of those late war (or "Luftwaffe 1946," the current all-inclusive name for those last-gasp Third Reich projects that never reached fruition) planes that, had it actually reached service, might have delayed the final Allied thrust into the heart of the Reich by a couple of weeks, at most. The name Hucklebein refers to a 1930s German cartoon character. Hucklebein was a raven who always got other people in trouble and derived pleasure from it. The Ta 183 was to have been powered by a Heinkel HeS 011 axial flow turbine, armed with four cannons and would have carried in a recessed bomb bay up to 500kg of bombs in varying combinations of sizes and weights. It would have been of composite construction with an aluminum fuselage and wooden wings and empennage. With a loaded weight of approximately 9,481 lbs, maximum speed of 593 mph, and ceiling of 47,244 ft., it would have been a formidable adversary for the contemporary Allied fighters. But history is full of what-ifs and might-have-beens. The Ta 183, for all its projected qualities, falls firmly into this category

The Kit

The PM Model Ta 183 (which is incorrectly called a Ta-183 on the box top and instruction sheet) is in 1/72nd scale and is comprised of 23 cleanly molded parts, 22 molded in grey plus one injection molded canopy. The parts count is small and some of the detailing (such as the seat, which I think should be an ejection seat similar to the one in the Heinkel He 219A-7 Uhu) is oversimplified. For example, on the prototype the main wheel doors had no interior, leaving the engine visible when the landing gear was down, and the kit includes none of this detail. The cannon access doors below the cockpit are missing, and no pitot tube or instrument panel is included. There is no sidewall

detail. The panel lines are finely scribed although several lines on the tail were indistinct at their ends. The wings are one-piece and have a curious grainy finish (at least they did on my example) [*Mine also - perhaps the mold maker was crudely attempting to simulate wooden wings? - ED*] which largely, though not completely disappeared beneath the paint and final clear coats. The front landing gear includes the front wheel and the rear landing gear feature separate anti-torque scissors, curious given the overall simplicity of the kit but welcome nonetheless. The canopy has minimal flash, is not overly thick and very clear, but the windshield framing is too wide. The small parts count and overall simplicity mean an easy and comparatively trouble-free build.

Camouflage and Markings

With "Luftwaffe '46" aircraft it should always be kept in mind that most of them never saw active service, so any proposed markings are inevitably spurious. PM plays it safe and suggests a late-War splinter camouflage scheme of RLM 81/82 over RLM 76. The decal sheet (which at roughly 1-1/2" by 2" is the smallest decal sheet I've yet seen) provides outline Balkenkreuz for the upper wings, black-centered Balkenkreuz for the lower wings and fuselage sides, and (unusually for a kit manufactured in the European Union) black Swastikas outlined in white for the tail. To their credit PM provides not only RLM color numbers but also Federal Standard color equivalents and item numbers for Humbrol, Model Master, Polly-Scale, Xtracolor, Pactra, Gunze Sangyo, Revell, and Tamiya paints. This information is **invaluable** for those new to the hobby who might not have every Luftwaffe color at their disposal.

Building the Model

With only 23 pieces this kit was a quick build. The interior, composed of seat, control column, rudder pedals, and floor, was a five-minute affair. The floor, seat, and sidewalls were painted RLM 66, the rudder pedals Silver, and the control column RLM 66 with Leather for the boot. Scrap lead

weight was glued with epoxy to the same fuselage half as the interior, and then the fuselage halves were glued together. I then attached the canopy with Testors Clear Part Cement, masked it with Scotch tape and sprayed the Interior color before the splinter colors were applied. Next the wings and tailplane were added and I used putty on the wing joints and bottom fuselage. I did not use enough putty on the fuselage, and did not succeed in making the seam fully disappear. The tailplanes have a slot to fit into the top of the tail and fit poorly. I used a fair amount of putty to make the pieces look as though they were one unit. Next came painting the splinter camouflage and then decaling, and final assembly of the wheel well doors and landing gear. The wheel wells and landing gear were painted RLM 02 and the oleos were painted Silver. A pitot tube was made from stretched sprue. The Ta 183 is probably the easiest kit I've built. All of the flaws in my finished model are down to my rushing things, not faults in the model itself.

Painting the Model

As mentioned earlier, this plane never reached active service so the kit camouflage recommendations can be discarded. Discussing late-War German camouflage schemes is like entering the proverbial minefield; there are as many opinions about what's right and appropriate as there are camouflage schemes. I discussed appropriate color schemes with Jim Schubert and he felt that *Versuchs* (test) markings and a single-color paint scheme (in one of the darker greys such as RLM 75) would be accurate for a hypothetical late-War prototype. Earlier in the War, test aircraft were often painted in a combination of natural metal and RLM 02, and Jim has in his reference collection an illustration of the Hucklebein in this paint scheme. Undoubtedly accurate, but rather on the boring side (actually, I've never attempted a natural metal finish and I'm leery about screwing it up; I probably should try this at some point, *but not on this particular model*) so I decided to do something a little more imaginative.

I took my inspiration from a pair of 1/48th scale Arba resin kits I saw recently at Skyway Model Shop. Both of these Luftwaffe '46 planes are painted in RLM 81/83 over RLM 84, which is quite a bright color combination. I decided to depict my plane as having flown with JG 54, which meant first painting an RLM 24 Blue Reich Defense fuselage band and masking this off. Through working with Brian Mulron I've learned a good method of painting complex splinter schemes, which of course I learned about *after* I began this project. Start by painting and masking the fuselage band, if any. Then paint and mask the splinter camouflage on the upper wings and then paint the wheel wells, lower wings, and lower fuselage. Next paint the upper fuselage splinter and do **not** mask it off. Paint the fuselage sides and upper fuselage demarcation line, and finish off with the mottling. This approach may be self-evident to those familiar with it, but I've never tried this method before. This approach makes **much** more sense, and saves tape as well!

Details, Decals

The kit decals were not that good in quality, nor did I feel they were particularly accurate, so despite Brian Mulron's advice to save all my decals I simply referred to them for sizing purposes and threw them away. I used decals from a variety of aftermarket sources and sheets. From Cutting Edge's "Scale Color" National Insignia sheet (CED72036) came black outline Swastikas, white outline upper wing and black outline lower wing Balkenkreuzes. From Third Group's excellent "III Gruppe JG 54 Grunherz" sheet (72-006) came the unit insignia and white outline fuselage Balkenkreuz.

From AeroMaster's "Luftwaffe Fighter Numbers" (72-010B) came "Red 7," outlined in white. I probably goofed here because I think that the third group of JG 54 had individual plane numbers in either yellow, white, or black. I'll defer to the "Experten" on this matter, but I wanted *red* numbers. The MicroScale finishing system in conjunction with Testors lacquer clear coats worked perfectly; none of the decals silvered. I used AeroMaster lacquers. I know I've written in past articles about using lacquers around our new daughter but I did my painting over at Brian Mulron's, where I didn't have to worry about that...

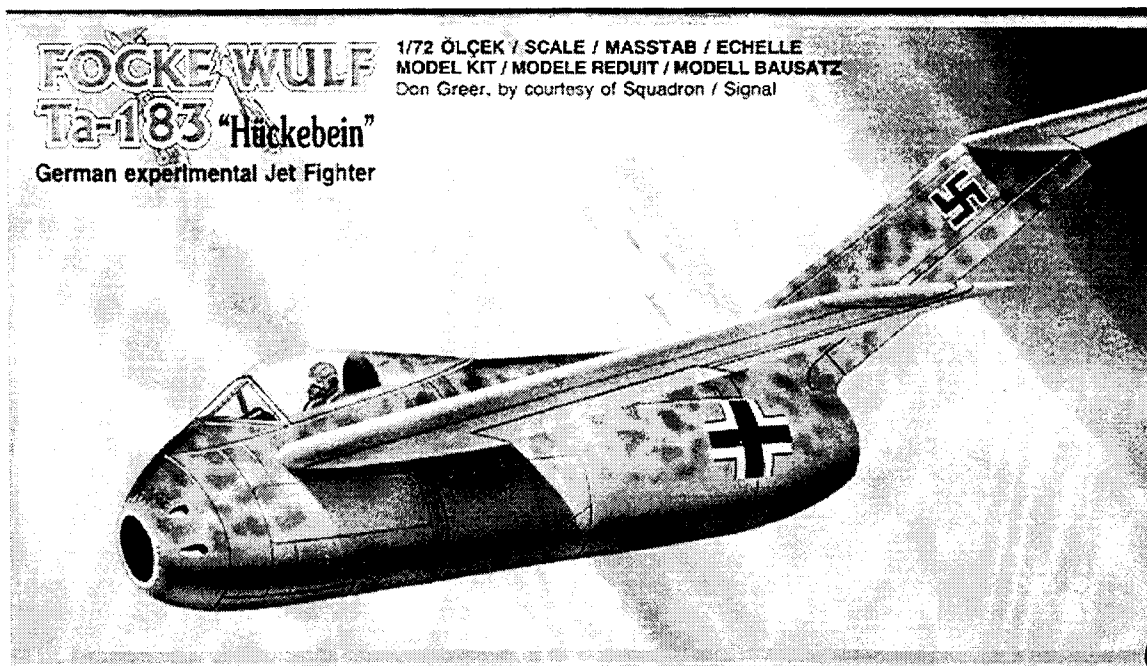
Conclusion

This is a good, sound kit with no vices. All of the problems I encountered were due to my own workmanship, such as not using enough putty to properly fair in the canopy, not using enough putty on the fuselage undersides, etc. Worst of all was my **not** adding some photo-etched seatbelts and additional interior detailing. I polished the canopy with Novus Plastic Polish and dipped it in Future. Because

there's no canopy framing to speak of, you can look right in there and see a rather spartan interior, plus the seams under the canopy which I failed to fill in at all - **oops!** Better luck next time.

I'll build a couple more of these Hucklebeins, and at least one of them will have the natural metal/ RLM 02 color combination. This kit is recommended, and it also fits all of the criteria of my self-imposed "Expand Your Horizons" campaign: it doesn't have a propeller (true, it's **still** a plane - have patience with me, George Stray! I will build some armor - this year, even), it's not a tail-dragger (the Ta 183 had tricycle landing gear) and *it's not a 109!*

(A picture of this model will be posted at the IPMS-Seattle web site).



*Most of the PM Model Ta 183 box - it was too wide for the scanner!
This kit has also been repackaged by Revell Germany.*

The Ta 183 and the MiG-15

by Robert Allen

Following the collapse of the Communist state, information about Soviet aircraft that had been formerly unavailable in the West started flowing out of the former USSR. It's fair to state that the flow has become a flood, helping to clear up many false assumptions and misconceptions that had been believed about Soviet aircraft. One of those concerns the Focke-Wulf Ta 183, and its influence on one of the classic fighter aircraft, the Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15. Many Western books and magazine articles have stressed the similarity of the two designs, giving rise to the implication that the MiG-15 was based on the Ta 183, and was merely a development of the unbuilt German jet fighter. Even the instruction sheet for the PM kit of the Ta 183 makes this claim, going so far as to include drawings of both aircraft.

Typical of this train of thought is this paragraph, taken from an otherwise very interesting and informative web site concerning Luftwaffe '46 projects:

"The Soviets found a complete set of plans for the Ta 183 in Berlin at the RLM offices, and began construction of six prototypes in March 1946 by the MiG design bureau. On July 2, 1947, the first Soviet-built Ta 183 took to the air powered by a British Rolls-Royce "Nene" turbojet. They discovered that the original Ta 183 design needed either automatic leading edge slots or wing boundary layer fences to alleviate low-speed stalling. Also, as a compromise between high-speed and low-speed flying, the horizontal stabilizer was moved approximately one-third down from the top of the vertical tail. The modified Ta 183 first flew on December 30, 1947 and in May 1948 was ordered into production as the MiG 15."

Unfortunately, aside from the correct first flight date of the S-01, the MiG-15 prototype, it's pure fabrication. The author of the web site appears to have taken at face value the unsubstantiated story related in David Myhra's *The Horton Brothers and*

Their All-Wing Aircraft (Schiffer, 1998), a book that contains all the typos and inaccuracies typical of Schiffer books, and is written by an author with no background in writing aviation history. His fictional account of the Soviet Ta 183 program is illustrated by a photo of a Ta 183 (in Luftwaffe markings) that's so obviously a model that it's laughable. Much more reliable books have appeared over the past few years giving the Soviet side of the story, and several strongly refute the specific claim that the MiG-15 was nothing more than a developed Ta 183. This passage from *MiG-15: Design, Development, and Korean War History* by Yefim Gordon and Vladimir Rigmant (Motorbooks, 1993) states their case:

"Soviet aircraft have been developed under conditions of super secrecy. For this reason, myths have taken hold concerning the creation of the MiG-15.

Myth number one: the MiG-15 was not a new aircraft but an in-depth modification of the Focke-Wulf Ta 183, developed by Kurt Tank.

Myth number two, which arose as a consequence of the first: Soviet aircraft designers could not do something worthwhile, and the MiG-15 would never have appeared without use of captured German material and "Captive brains."

The use of the captured materials in developing advanced technologies was not an unusual practice, and the USSR was not alone in doing this. The United States, Great Britain, and other countries took advantage of German projects after the war."

It's worth noting that the recent rash of Russian-authored books have not been shy about admitting the truth regarding Soviet aircraft that were related to foreign designs. The classic example is the Tupelov Tu-4 bomber, reverse engineered from the B-29, and an aircraft that Stalin wanted to get into service so quickly that he forbade Tupelov engineers from making any improvements to the design! Other Soviet designs based on foreign aircraft included the first Sukhoi Su-9 (not the '50s production aircraft,) which was based on

the Messerschmitt Me 262 (and incurred Stalin's wrath as a result,) and the MiG I-270, which was inspired by the Junkers Ju 248/Messerschmitt Me 263. German engines were copied and used in early Soviet jets. Two teams of German aircraft designers were also imported by the USSR, where they continued to develop German projects such as the Junkers Ju 287 bomber and DFS 346 research aircraft, with little success. All of these cases are fully documented. But a run of six Ta 183s being made by MiG in 1947? The Ta 183 is conspicuous by its absence in any of the books I've read. I've simply seen no Soviet-related documentation that such aircraft existed.

To start with, neither the Ta 183 or any derivatives is even mentioned in Bill Gunston and Yefim Gordon's *MiG Aircraft Since 1937*, (Putnam, 1998), a comprehensive history of Mikoyan-Gurevich. As for its accuracy, it's not a Schiffer written by a neophyte, it's a Putnam, and it's by Bill Gunston. What more could you possibly want? If it isn't in there, it's a pretty sure bet that it didn't exist. At the time the OKB was supposedly making the Ta 183 copies, they were engaged in several other projects, including the I-270, MiG-9, and the genesis of the "S," which would become the MiG-15. They could hardly have had time to run bootleg copies of an aircraft of which "detail design work was never completed." (*German Aircraft of the Second World War*, Smith & Kay, Putnam, 1972). As for the supposed first flight date of July 2, 1947, that's remarkably close to the date of the first flight of the first Soviet swept-wing jet, the Lavochkin La-160, which flew on June 24, 1947. I guess the La-160 looks a bit like a Ta 183 if you squint hard enough.

Other factors work against the Ta 183 theory. One of those is that the MiG-15 was designed around the Rolls-Royce Nene engine, which in one of those idiotic decisions that British Labour governments are so fond of, was given to the USSR in 1946. Would you design a fighter based around a new engine using an unbuilt project? The similarities, and there are some, between the two designs are superficial, based primarily on the mid-

continued on page 15

Credit Where Credit Is Due

by Bob LaBouy, IPMS #3064

I am not sure about you, but one of the greatest satisfactions I have had is to see how much accurate research is done by my fellow modelers.

As an aside for those of you who haven't had the opportunity to visit and perform personal research in some of the greatest aircraft museums and archives, you might be surprised to learn that IPMS documentation and articles are often contained in files related to specific aircraft, pilots, units or actions. I have found many IPMS member articles and research at the Naval Aviation Museum, the Air Force Museum, the National Air & Space Museum, the Duxford collection and the main collection of England's Imperial War Museum, and in the Library of Congress.

I mention this as a introductory footnote to the fine effort recently demonstrated by local member Paul Ludwig in his book, *American Spitfire Camouflage and Markings*.

Congratulations are due Paul, and not only because he has co-authored this fine collection of pictures, artwork and markings references about American-flown Spitfires during World War II. More important from my standpoint (and I hope that of many other modelers interested in portraying models of our country's aircraft in that epochal war) is that this is the first work I am aware of which addresses this topic as a separate subject. Possibly a dead give away about my lack of resources regarding the U.S. use of the beautiful Spitfire, I was also very pleased to see the large number of photos detailing our use and their markings in a number of theaters of action. True to his interest as a modeler, Paul has also included a number of color profiles (including a couple of great three-views), and a list of the appropriate national insignia and color references (listing both common names and federal standard equivalents).

Though it is the shortest section in the book, Paul also briefly mentions and illustrates the U.S. Navy's use of the Spitfire in support of the Normandy landings by Navy Observation Squadron Seven (VCS-7). I had a friend who flew some of those missions, and I have always marveled at the almost unheard of participation of our Navy's use of the Spitfire. And of course (for those of enamored with the beautiful Curtiss biplane) the fact that Paul included one of the few photos taken of the SOC Seagulls which also participated in the Navy's ship observations of its naval artillery in support of the landings, clearly makes this book most worthwhile.

I picked up my copy of this Ventura Publications book (1998 printing) at Emil's Skyway Model Shop at its list price of \$15.95. The text and photos run a bit over 72 pages, make for some fascination reading and give a number of ideas for future models of a plane which already has earned its place in aviation history. I encourage you to pick it for your reference library, and feel it fills a definite niche in a modeler's collection about significant World War II flying machines. The fact that we now have another local author in our midst is a further recommendation. Congratulations again, Paul!

Book Review:

Death Traps: The Survival of an Armored Division in WW II by Belton Y. Cooper

review by Wesley Moore

On the model table at the February meeting was a sample of parts of a new kit of the "T-2", an "armored recovery vehicle." I thought the strange angular shape (a semi on steroids?) looked familiar (I build *airplane* models)- when the guy who brought it explained what it was, I realized it was an important character in a book I had just read.

I continue to be amazed that new books on the Second World War, based on first-hand experiences, keep appearing (those guys are getting *old!*). Cooper's point of view was that of the maintenance liaison officer for one of the "Combat Commands" of an Armored Division, which landed at Normandy and fought its way across France and into Germany. His job was to collect up the damaged tanks, get the serial numbers off the destroyed tanks (bureaucracy must be appeased, even in combat), and get the new and repaired tanks (and crews) back to the front.

The chief moral of this tale is that U.S. tank crews in Northern Europe were very poor insurance risks. The Sherman was a sort-of-decent tank in North Africa in 1942, but even the 'long barrel' versions could barely scratch the frontal armor of the Tiger or Panther in 1944. The Germans had good tanks, good anti-tank guns, good 'panzer-fausts,' and knew how to use them. There were a number of unpleasant ways to die...

Other things one learns (at least if you're an airplane buff wandering into new territory):

- The combat situation could get ridiculously "fluid" – the concept of a "front line" sometimes lost all meaning. One could blunder into German units of all sizes between the maintenance base and the "front," and you didn't know if they would shoot, retreat, or surrender.
- A maintenance crew had to be masters of improvisation to keep an armored division running. A good welder could perform miracles: one Sherman had the hole in the armor (from the shot that knocked it out) plugged with the projectile found inside (from the shot that knocked it out) welded in place and ground down smooth! (No, they did *not* tell the new crew...)

There is a photo section- I think most of them are from personal collections, and haven't been seen in print before, but, not being an armor buff, I don't really know. They are not the sort that will help so with

any details, but there might be some diorama ideas, especially from the sequence of the M-26 in a street-fighting shoot-out. My main complaint is that there are only three maps, and they don't even show all of the places mentioned in the corresponding text.

I think that any well-rounded modeler should read stuff that goes beyond modeling methods, and beyond the technical info on the 'real thing', to the time and place when the subjects of his (or her) hobby became part of history. This book does a fascinating job of doing just that. I encourage other members of our chapter to share similar reading experiences with the membership via the Newsletter. Presidio Press, 1998

It's Official! – Luftwaffe Color Chart

by Bob LaBouy, IPMS #3064

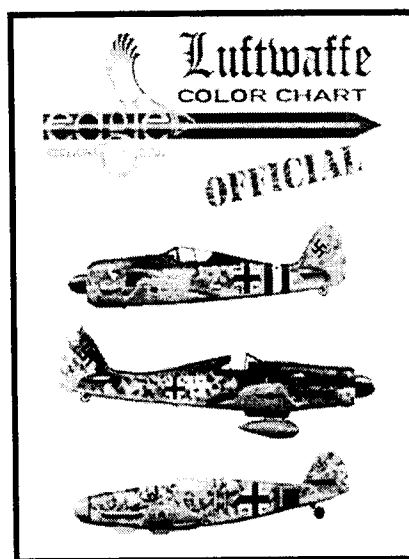
I know I mentioned earlier about recognizing fellow IPMS members' efforts and I don't want to beat this drum to death.

However I also just received a great addition to my personal research library (and I assume each of you also looks at your modeling purchases in this same light....you know those items, research and information which will enable you to model your favorite subjects in a more accurate manner). Jerry Crandall, whom many of you know from his outstanding artwork and long devotion to almost anything regarding Germany's World War II aircraft, has just released his *Official Luftwaffe Color Chart*.

You may be asking "so what's official about this set of colors?" It's official because, as usual, Jerry and his co-collaborators have really done their homework. They have not just trotted out the usual referenced colors and said, "here they are guys." Jerry has long been researching not only the colors from color photographs (where they exist - and the Germans did have some pretty good/accurate color films in the 30's and 40's),

but has also broken some very unique ground in his analysis of colors.

His research is based on computer analysis of black and white photos (using the known and readily identifiable colors in those shots). This has enabled Jerry to document some of the colors you see in his decals and books, which have formerly not been even mentioned in references of that era and those aircraft. This includes several browns and several colors for which there were two colors for the same RLM name and number. The other unique aspect of this thirty-color chip set is that the colors are authenticated by the factory



that actually produced these paints for the Luftwaffe during WW II, Warnecke & Böhm, GMBH & Co. I believe these chips, which are each dead flat and 2" x 2," are a great guide and provide the best and certainly one of the most accurate such gauges available to those of us interested in Germany's military aircraft of the period.

I believe this is a great addition to the other notable guides previously published, including the Merrick & Hitchcock *Official Monogram*..., (which I'm not certain is still available), and clearly supplements the older Green books, the Airtime guide and Barry Rosch's *Markings and Units* masterpiece.

I purchased my copy directly from the Eagle Editions, Ltd; which is the business owned and operated by Judy and Jerry

Crandall, for \$19.95 and p & h. It came very nicely packaged with a heavy, flat container and the chips are protected by a glassine type protector sheet. Jerry has also included a copy of the beautiful side profiles done by Thomas A. Tullis, who is certainly making his mark in this arena of aircraft markings as well. If you've not already "surf'd" by their web site, you might be interested in what's keeping those fine folks in Hamilton, Montana busy these days. Especially if you are interested in highly accurate decals and art work for the World War II period, put your hands to the key board and get on over to: <http://www.eagle-editions.com/>

From my vantage point, I hope you'll be as pleased as I am.

The Ta 183 & the MiG-15

from page 9

wing layout and that broad, sweeping vertical fin. But the differences are major. To start with, the horizontal tail surfaces of the MiG-15 are midway up the tail, while the Ta 183 had a T-tail. The main undercarriage of the MiG-15 retracted into the wings while the Ta 183's went into the fuselage. Even the sweep is considerably different. The MiG-15 wing sweep was 35 degrees at quarter-chord; the Ta 183 was swept back 40 degrees (32 degrees in the later Project II.) The tail of the MiG-15 was swept at 56 degrees, the Ta 183 at 60 degrees. The wings of the Ta 183 were flat; the MiG-15 had -2 degrees anhedral. Gordon and Rigmant's book mentioned above goes into detail on why each of the MiG-15's design characteristics were adopted; none had anything to do with the Ta 183. There's also the fact that substantial parts of the Ta 183 were to be made of wood, and the MiG-15 was an all-metal aircraft.

That the Soviet designers used captured German data, and that their jet fighters would not have been developed as quickly without that info is indisputable, and MiG made as much use of the data as anyone. But so did the engineers at North American, SAAB, and other companies, and few have accused them of making copies. The SAAB J 29 Tunnan looks as much like a Ta

continued on page 16

A Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

by Andrew Birkbeck
IPMS Seattle Spring Show
Awards Organizer

I trust that everyone who attended this year's IPMS Seattle Spring Show enjoyed themselves very much. One key to the success of this year's show was the generosity of a number of the show vendors and local hobby shops, who provided prizes for the Junior modelers who entered models in the Contest, as well as some very nice gift certificates.

Owner Rick Wiegand of HobbyTown Lynnwood provided a \$50 gift certificate for the Junior Best in Show winner, and owner Bob Jacobsen of Galaxy Hobby, Lynnwood also provided a gift certificate, for \$30. Fellow IPMS Seattle member Emil Minerich, owner of Skyway Model Shop, was particularly generous, providing a \$50 gift certificate which was awarded to the Judges' Best In Show Winner.

In fact, Emil was VERY generous this year, for not only did he provide the gift certificate, but he donated a mountain of excellent models to the show, in order that our Junior entrants could go away with big smiles on their faces. Emil, together with vendors R&J Enterprises, Kevin Callahan

of The Supply Depot, Kevin Zee and Tom Morton, gave enough models to allow IPMS Seattle to award EVERY Junior entrant a number of models to take away with them. Hopefully they will have them built in time for next year's event! Thanks very much to each of these vendors, and especially to Emil Minerich of Skyway. Your generosity was most appreciated by the Juniors and the organizers.

[A full report on the show will appear in next month's issue - ED]

The Ta 183 & the MiG-15

from page 15

183 as the MiG-15 does, even more so forward of the wing, and it's known that while designing the J 29, SAAB engineers acquired German data on swept wings via Switzerland. Yet they aren't (and shouldn't be) accused of plagiarism.

Carl-Fredrik Guest's wonderful book *Under the Red Star: Luftwaffe Aircraft in the Soviet Airforce* (Airlife, 1993) goes into great detail describing German aircraft projects that were continued post-war in the Soviet Union. Once again, the Ta 183 is not mentioned, except to note that Kurt Tank was "invited" to continue his work in the Soviet Union, with specific mention of Ta 183 project. Fortunately for Tank, he was able to continue his work in the West,

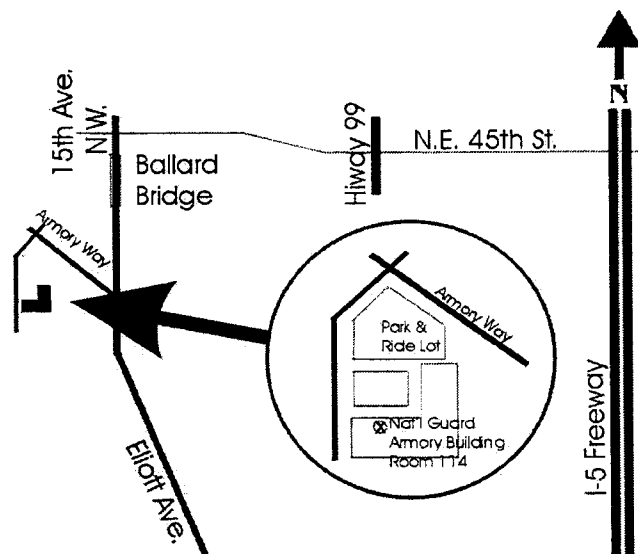
where he eventually produced the unsuccessful I.Ae.33 Pulqui II, which certainly owed much to the Ta 183, though Tank did not have the benefit of working with Focke-Wulf colleague Hans Multhopp, who was responsible for much of the original design. Strange how the original designer couldn't make a good aircraft, while the "copy" went on to become of the most successful fighters ever flown...

Guest has the last word on the subject, though. He notes,

"After the return of the German engineers [in the '50s the German engineers from the two design bureaux were allowed to return home - ED] a number of accounts of the work performed in the USSR were published in various Western aviation journals. As many of these articles were - for obvious reasons - published anonymously, appropriate attention was not always paid to the - naturally rather vague - information content, which was considered either "science-fiction" (in the literal meaning of this phrase) or on the other hand as definitive proof, badly needed by Cold war anti-Soviet propagandists, that the MiG-15 etc. were of German origin!"

Nowadays, we have enough information to know better. While acknowledging that the MiG-15's designers used German research, it's inaccurate and disrespectful to the men of the MiG OKB to suggest that the MiG-15 was anything but a brilliant original design.

Meeting Reminder:



Saturday, April 17, 1999

10:00 a.m.

National Guard Armory, Room 114
1601 West Armory Way, Seattle

Directions: From North or Southbound I-5, take the 45th St. exit. Drive west on 45th, crossing under Highway 99 (or Aurora Ave. North) toward N.W. Market Street in Ballard. Continue west on Market St. toward 15th Ave N.W. Turn left (south) onto 15th Ave N.W. and drive across the Ballard Bridge until you reach Armory Way (just as you see the Animal Shelter.) Watch for signs. Park in the Metro Park & Ride lot.

If coming from the South, take Highway 99 onto the Alaskan Way viaduct to Western Avenue. Follow Western Ave. north to Elliot Ave. until it turns into 15th Ave N.W., then to Armory Way itself.