

Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS-USA
December 2000

PREZNOTES



It's been a few weeks since the election, and in a few more we may all have a new President. It was a tough choice this time around. Whenever there was a dearth of viable candidates, my dad would always threaten to vote for Gus Hall, Communist Party. I don't know if he ever did but he always made the threat, loud and clear. (If he did, I think it's why Nixon won in '68). Unfortunately, Mr. Hall passed away a few weeks prior to the election so that option was taken away and I could not carry on my dad's legacy...

The thing I miss least are the negative ad campaigns: "When is someone going to change the Senator's diapers. Wah, Wah, Wah..."

I got to be pretty good with the mute button for the TV and when the phone rang: "Hi, this is Tipper Gor..." I was damn fast at hanging up, although once the phone nearly ended up in the pot on the stove with the spaghetti. At least it's over now. The recorded phone messages for the politicians at the dinner hour have ceased, only to be replaced with solicitations for carpet cleaning and window replacements! But enough about politics (much more than I have ever commented on in a public venue - sorry).

Something I've been fiddling about with lately are complete resin kits. Currently on, or near, my bench are the Reheat Focke-Wulf Triebflugel and the Arba Bv 155. Both are late war subjects, the Triebflugel being only a paper project whilst the Bv 155 actually flew. What you get are a handful of parts, cast in resin, with vacuform canopies, no decals, and bare bones instructions. Some kits I've seen include photo etch, decals and more, but in my two examples, none. They are more of a challenge than a standard injection molded kit but are somewhat easier than a vacuform kit, depending on the vacuform manufacturer. Basically, once you have removed the pouring gates you are ready for assembly. In some cases the manufacturer

has taken care of this step. The primary adhesive is CA, or superglue, although 5-minute epoxy will work as well. I have found that parts adhere better if mating surfaces are sanded slightly. Some parts need to be pinned for added strength. Some kits come with white metal fiddly bits, such as landing gear, prop blades and so on, but the model still needs to be handled much more gingerly than an injection molded kit. The parts are much more susceptible to breakage than the standard plastic kit. The examples I mention were both devoid of any air bubbles that needed filling and in each kit there were no serious mold seams that needed attention. I am somewhat concerned that the long and heavy wings of the Bv 155 will sag over time or that the outer wing attachment to the center section of the wing will fail eventually, but that may be quite some time in the future (I'm hoping). The most difficult aspect of these kits is the assembly when you are using CA. You definitely have to have the parts perfectly aligned when applying the adhesive. At least that's **my** biggest problem with all-resin kits.

One thing I like about them is of course, the subject matter. Tamiya or Revellogram

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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, and may be paid to Norm Filer, our Treasurer. (See address above). We also highly recommend our members join and support IPMS-USA, the national organization. See below for form. Any of the members listed above will gladly assist you with further information about the Chapter or Society.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Chapter or IPMS-USA. You are encouraged to submit any material for this newsletter to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise. The newsletter is currently being edited using a PC, and PageMaker 6.5. Any Word or WordPerfect document for the PC would be suitable for publication. Articles can also be submitted via e-mail, to the editor's address above. Deadline for submission of articles is generally twelve days prior to the next meeting. 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 2000/2001 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 (though all currently listed are second Saturdays). We suggest that you keep this information in a readily accessible place. All meetings begin at 10:00 AM.

December 9, 2000**February 10, 2001****January 13, 2001****February 10, 2001****IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION**

IPMS No.: _____ Name: _____

(leave blank)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Signature (required by PO): _____

- ☐ Adult: \$19 ☐ Junior (17 years old or younger): \$9
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IPMS/USA

P.O. Box: 6138

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Check out our web page: www.ipmsusa.org

**Remember to
bring goodies to
eat and drink to
the December
meeting!**

Two Looks at Scale Modelworld 2000:

The Telford Caper

by John Alcorn

During October, about 40 Colonials invaded Blighty to attend the Scale Modelworld 2000 World Championships. Thirty-seven of us were on a tour conducted by Twin Horizons Travel, of Dublin (!), Ohio, and led by Roger Coe. The basic tour departed from O'Hare, Chicago on the 17th, returning on the 24th, via Virgin Air. Curious name, Virgin Air, but better, I suppose, than Fille de Joie Journeys, Hooker Holidays, Soiled Dove Destinations, or Ladies of the Night Flights. However, I managed to go directly from SeaTac to Heathrow - and return - aboard British Airways, leaving on the 16th. The Convention took place in Telford, just north of Birmingham, on Saturday and Sunday (the 21st & 22nd), the rest of the time being spent in London, and *en route* by coach.

Now, if you haven't heard of Telford, and can't find it on the map, it's because, so far as we know, it consists only of the Convention Centre and its parking lot, plus a few nearby inns and pubs to serve it. And, if you can't find reference to it in your history books, that's because it was only created in 1968, evidently for the primary purpose of hosting IPMS/UK Nationals. Incidentally, we shared the Convention Centre complex with the Snookers World Championships - snookers, I'm told, being some aberrant English form of billiards. (They pride themselves on aberrance, you know: for example, by driving on the wrong side of the road, and speaking a corrupted form of American.) The local inns having evidently been previously booked by snookers, we were obliged to put up in an 1865-vintage manor house in Wolverhampton, 20 miles distant.

While I had been led to understand that this was the first of an ongoing, annual IPMS/International Contest/Convention, I'm really not sure just exactly what we did attend! I've heard it described also as a one-time IPMS/UK Nats, in celebration of the new Millennium. But, the locals told me that the Continentals always show up anyhow, and it's gotten worse since the Chunnel opened.

Anyhow, no matter what else it was, it was a hoot! It attracted by far the largest vendor presence that I've ever seen. One curious, but interesting aspect of the vendor area was the intermingled profusion of Special Interest Group (SIG) displays, put on by various IPMS/UK chapters. Many and varied were the topics covered, from impressive dioramas to an acre (or so it seemed) of Spitfires. In fact, large though the hall was, the vendor area put the squeeze on the contest entries.

I felt that the general level of modeling competence was quite high - I saw few, if any, "turkeys", although I admit that I had eyes (and time) only for the aircraft. Not surprisingly, 1/48th scale was well represented, with many fine models in evidence, by craftsmen (sorry, -persons) from France, Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, Malta (yes, Malta - they have a very active group there), Austria, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany, as well as Britain. Oh yes, and there were a few Colonials too, including Canadians and Yankees.

At this point, I can't resist the rather immodest temptation to remark that my 1/24th scale scratchbuilt DH.9A was awarded Best of Show - which absolutely blew me away, since it was totally unexpected.

When I put the Ninak in Category 18, among all of those impressive scratchbuilt models, I thought, "Oh well, perhaps it will get a Commended." Without even its diorama-like base (which was too big and awkward to take), it looked quite forlorn amid such impressive entries as Alan Clark's just-completed Halifax and his

Blackburn Firecrest; a Heinkel 219 Uhu, and a very nicely rendered Short Sunderland (this actually from a vacuform kit). It just goes to show, once again, that there's no accounting for judges.

The awards ceremony was a very low-key affair, conducted on Sunday afternoon - a far cry from our banquets, replete with the Bill Devins/Aris Pappas Show. English understatement, I suppose.

And will it be held again next year? - Quien sabe?

A Seattle Yankee's Adventures in Merrie Olde England

by John Greer

It all started with an anniversary. Marian and I celebrated our 25th in June at Salishan Lodge on the Oregon coast. (Hey, even old model builders do something right once in a while.) Now you know, gentlemen, that we generally have it pretty easy. All we have to do is buy one of those outrageously expensive little sparkly things, and our wives are happy. They, on the other hand, have a much harder time of it. Usually, what we want, we a) have; b) can't afford; or c) wouldn't want them to pick out for us anyway.

Marian came up with a very creative solution. While we were at Salishan, and after I had given her the little sparkly thing, she presented me with a beautiful hand-made gift certificate - with no limit. The possibilities were mind-boggling. At first I considered a ride in a Mustang (P-51, that is), but at \$500 for a half hour, it just didn't seem worth it.

Then I started seeing ads for the World Con. At about the same time, Marian found out that she had to go to Hawaii to help care for her mother after surgery.

Don't you just love it when a plan comes together? While she was in Hawaii, I would take a week in the UK and attend "the big one." So here I am at 7 pm Seattle time, Wednesday, October 18, on a British Airways 747-200 for nine hours plus, non-stop to London Heathrow. More later – the beverage cart has arrived.

Remember the old carnivals and the shooting galleries where the little ducks went back and forth and back and forth? Translate that into the British Airways beverage cart – back and forth, etc. I think I'm still at least semi-coherent, but after the "shooting gallery," I'm not too sure. It's 9:30 Seattle time, and I need to get some sleep.

It's now 1:30 am Seattle time, and 9:30 am London time. The sky here (and I'm assuming that "here" is about an hour out of Heathrow) is clear blue. We caught a good jet stream that shortened the flight considerably. Breakfast is on the way. My next challenge is to find the quickest and cheapest way to get from Heathrow to Wolverhampton. I know – the convention is in Telford, but just try to get a room there! I have several possibilities as to how to accomplish this...

It is now 8:30 pm, and I am in my room at the Holiday Inn Garden Court Hotel in Wolverhampton. A most interesting journey from Heathrow to this room. As we were getting off the plane, I was asking anyone who looked like a native for the quickest way to Wolverhampton. An older gentleman (probably ten years older than me), who was with his son, said, "We're driving to Birmingham. We'll get you to the train station there."

For a share of the petrol cost, I saved several hours and about \$50. The gentleman's son is a Bruce Lee/Jimi Hendrix fan, and they had been to Seattle to see "the Blob" a.k.a. the EMP. They also spoke in highest praise of our transit system. Do they know something that we don't?

After they dropped me off in Birmingham, I caught the train to Wolverhampton. If there's one thing the British understand, it's light rail! Quiet, fast, inexpensive – it's like a subway underground. I arrived in Wolverhampton, took a cab to the hotel, crashed for three hours, and then had dinner. Tomorrow will be a shopping day here, and a day to adjust for jet lag.

It is now 3 am Saturday. That's 7 pm Friday in Seattle – I think. I'm wide-awake. Where did Friday go? Most of it was spent in bed – a 24-hour bug, I hope – but maybe it's partly the jet lag, too. I did some shopping in Wolverhampton, and I have come to one conclusion. There are no square corners in England. Talk about lost! It makes sense to me that if you start walking and make three right turns, you will come back to your starting point. Not bloody likely! Another interesting feature is the combination department/grocery stores. Imagine Nordstrom's and QFC sharing an aisle. Remember the clear blue sky I mentioned? Forget it. The rain started at about noon on Friday, and hasn't quit yet. Just like a typical western Washington drizzle, and just as depressing. In five hours, I'll be off to the Convention!

Good Lord, what chaos! Local clubs, Special Interest Groups, vendors, and competition models all mixed together in a space that seemed the size of a football field. There were so many people that they had traffic control on all of the adjacent roads. This has got to be the biggest model show on the planet.

I left Wolverhampton at 8:45 this morning for the thirty-minute trip to Telford. I met a gentleman from Brussels on the platform, and we talked models all the way. We had about a mile to walk from the Station to the Telford International Centre, and it just seemed that we walked faster and faster as we got closer. My IPMS Seattle shirt got me in free – thanks, Terry!

First, the vendors. As far as modeling is concerned, if it's out there, it was at

Telford today, and so were all the "big dogs." I had a nice chat with Alan Hall – Hall Park Books' next special (like their P-47 extravaganza) will be the Bf 109. I spent some time with Julian Edwards. He was appalled that Terry is still playing "those bloody pipes." I met dozens of people – club members, vendors, visitors, - modelers all. It was fantastic, and the IPMS Seattle shirt did it time and time again. Typical comment – "You're a long way from home."

There were displays by local clubs from all over the UK, and national clubs from all over the world. This was something that really impressed me, and is something that we don't seem to have here. One group had a display of Aircraft of the Aces in 1/48th scale. Another had 1/48th scale Spitfires, from the prototype to the Seafire 47 – nearly 60 models in all.



A small part of the English Electric SIG display. Your editor is speechless...

The SIGs (Special Interest Groups) were another eye opener for me. I'd heard and read about them, but had never seen them in action. Four – Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland – were all in a row, with great displays. They were all kidding each other unmercifully!

You can imagine the competition models. The one that boggled my mind was a six-foot long model of the forward end of the Titanic sitting on the bottom of the ocean, built using the photos brought up by

submersibles. The more you looked, the better it got. There were so many great models that after a while I just went numb. Maybe tomorrow, I can be a bit more objective. I gave myself a pat on the back for not spending so much that I have to mortgage the house or have my wife go back to work (fat chance of that).



R.M.S Titanic

Sunday morning. What did I say earlier about British trains? Silly me! Yesterday, there was a train every 30 minutes to Telford. Today, no train until 11 am. Wonderful. Can you say “expensive cab ride?” Still, I’m here, and I’m not going to miss it.

Dioramas always impress me, because of the thought, creativity, and patience shown by the modeler, in addition to the great skills. Several of the dioramas were fantastic! I’ve already mentioned the Titanic. There was also a roughly six-foot long German U-Boat moored at a dock, with sea walls, streets, buildings, and people – the whole works. Another impressive model was of a German armored train on the Eastern front, in 1/35th scale. In terms of single models, I saw the large scale Blackburn Firecrest that was featured in one of the model mags last year. Not in competition was a scratchbuilt 1/24th scale Supermarine Sea Otter – you know, a Walrus with a tractor instead of a pusher. I chatted with the builder for a while. It was an eight-month project. He had a photo

scrapbook of the entire construction process. Even the Bristol Mercury engine was totally scratchbuilt. Incredible!

There were a number of both 1/72nd and 1/48th super-detailed aircraft. They had everything hanging, panels off, interiors and engines exposed, and were beautifully done. I know that I harp on the idea of being able to “buy” a super model, what with all of the aftermarket stuff that’s available, but these builders have great skills to be able to put it together so beautifully.

All of the competition models were outstanding. I thought that the ships and armor – especially 1/35th scale armor – were remarkable. As far as aircraft, I believe that our local builders could at least hold their own, and probably bring home considerable hardware. *[Not to belabor the point, but one of them did; John Alcorn’s DH.9A took Best in Show – ED]* It was hard to see everything because it was so jumbled up, and so crowded. There were cameras everywhere.



The U-Boat diorama. I wish this photo was larger - the detail is fantastic!

I left the convention at around 12:30pm, grabbed lunch, went back to Wolverhampton for my luggage, and caught the train to London. We were rolling merrily along, about one hour from Euston Station, when the train suddenly slowed and stopped in the middle of

nowhere. After the conductor mumbled something about a track problem ahead, we backed up for about fifteen miles so that we could switch to another track. We finally got into London about an hour late.

I wasn’t about to haul my luggage on the Tube, so I grabbed a taxi – and we promptly got caught in the middle of a pro-Palestinian demonstration. I finally got to the hotel. Bill Osborn, do you remember the London hotel in 1985? This one has been remodeled and has a much better shower, but is otherwise similar. The largest dimension of the room is its height. The room is so narrow that you have to get into bed by crawling over the end. Still, it does have a free Continental breakfast, and it’s close to a tube station. Tomorrow it’s off to Hannant’s and Motor Books, then I have to find something for Marian.

It’s now Tuesday afternoon. Yesterday was devoted to shopping. Hannant’s was out of the way, but worthwhile. I found some great resin kits. Motor Books was disappointing. Maybe it’s just that everybody else has the same stuff now. Shopping for Marian? Forget it! My feet are killing me and I didn’t find a thing.

I spent the morning at the Imperial War Museum. It’s still wonderfully done. Now I’m back in my cell, getting ready for tomorrow’s flight home. I had to buy another bag for my dirty laundry, because all of the good stuff I’ve bought filled up the suitcase. Tomorrow, it’s off to Heathrow.

I guess it all comes down to this – Was it worth it? To quote the locals, “Bloody well right!” Will I do it again? Probably not alone, and probably not unless I win the Lottery, but I sure hope I can pull it off.

[Photos taken from Les Piper’s wonderful web site Royal Air Force Front Line Aircraft since 1939 at www.mousematssystems.com/modelling/model_site - ED]

Japanese Aviation Paint Colors in WW2

by Andrew Birkbeck

I recently started work on Hasegawa's 1/48th scale Ki-84 Frank kit. At a recent chapter meeting member Ira Shelton brought for "Show and Tell" what I considered a superb example of the modeling art, in the form of a 1/48th Japanese WW2 fighter. If memory serves me it was a Ki-44 Tojo. He followed this up at the November meeting with an equally fine Japanese J2M Jack fighter. The Ki-44 inspired me to start my Ki-84, and the Jack kept the fire lit for me.

And as luck would have it, at the same November meeting member Jacob Russell brought in his Hasegawa Ki-84, albeit in an unfinished state. Also present was at least one person who wished to tell me that the cockpit color Jacob had used was "incorrect." Personally, I try to steer clear from saying anything "negative" about a fellow modeler's work. I feel it is none of my business how he/she builds, paints, decals, or weathers their model. It is after all a hobby, where you are beholden to no one but yourself. You can paint your model any color you feel like, be it historically correct or not. The same goes for the markings. Or the workmanship they put into their project. To my mind, it is "theirs," and hence none of my business. If they want my opinion, I will let them ask for it. If they don't, then I will remain silent in such "personal" situations.

All this did however lead me to thoughts on my own Ki-84. For in discussing Ki-84s with Jacob, he stated that according to his research, Ki-84s had their cockpits painted a gray hue. Mine however, sitting back at the house, was painted Aotake, the greenish/blue translucent lacquer used by the Japanese as one form of protection for metal cockpit parts. Very interesting, thought I, who had taken Hasegawa's kit instructions for granted when they stated Aotake as the correct color. *[Just to throw another spanner into the works, the*

instruction sheet for Hasegawa's 1/72nd scale Ki-84 calls for the interior to be painted light green! – ED]

Let me state up front that I am not usually a color and markings fanatic. I tend to go with what the kit or after market decal instructions tell me are the correct colors to paint my model, along with some rudimentary reading I have done over the years on such matters. One assumes that kit manufacturers base their judgments on some sort of research, after all. And given the nationalistic zeal of the Japanese, I would expect a Japanese kit of a Japanese aircraft to be fairly well researched.

But Jacob's source was fairly adamant about the gray for the Ki-84 cockpit, so off home I went to check into the matter.

Jacob used articles taken from the *Asahi Journal*, the "magazine" of the IPMS/USA Special Interest Group on WW2 Japanese aircraft, as his reference. Within my collection of references, I had a book published by the IPMS/UK WW2 Japanese aircraft SIG on WW2 Japanese Army aircraft. The Ki-84 was an Army aircraft. And within this book, the authors state that indeed the Ki-84 could have its cockpit painted Aotake. I then turned to another "authority" on WW2 Japanese aircraft, Ian Baker of Australia. Mr. Baker has produced a number of monographs on the colors and markings of Japanese military aircraft. And he states that the Ki-84 could have its cockpit painted Aotake, among other colors. So there you have it, three different sources, contradictory claims. And so I read on.....

Let us admit up front that of the thousands of aircraft produced by Japanese industry prior to and during WW2, virtually none exist today. Far fewer Japanese aircraft exist today (in any form) than equivalent British, German, US, or Russian aircraft. The Allies shot them down, destroyed them on the ground, or melted them down following the end of hostilities. Many of those that do exist have been out in the elements unprotected, and so the colors they are painted have changed over the

years. And even if they haven't changed, they are a few examples of thousands produced, and might not be representative of every one of a particular type produced.

Secondly, I have seen very few period color photographs of WW2 Japanese aircraft, and one of those was taken in a boneyard immediately following the end of hostilities. The Japanese took far fewer photographs during WW2 than the Allies, let alone the photo-crazed Germans, and only a few were in color. The one I mentioned above was taken by an American. And being 1940s color, it isn't that accurate anyway. So color shots of Japanese interiors from the era under discussion are virtually non-existent.

Third: partly for strategic military reasons, always with revenge on their minds, American strategic planners bombed Japan back to the Stone Age during WW2. There are very few primary references from the Japanese air forces in existence today, giving operational orders on what colors to paint which aircraft, specifics on paint mixes etc. They went up in the inferno that was late war Japan.

It also seems that Japanese manufacturers were given leeway to concoct their own recipes for any given color. Consequently, there was "Mitsubishi Green", "Nakajima Green" etc. These had subtle, yet noticeable differences to their hues, yet ostensibly were for the same operational painting orders. It is also apparent from reading the various research material that even within a given firm, different production plants concocted different hues for the same specs. This could have been due to a mis-mixing of the ingredients, or a shortage of particular ingredients at any given time. The Japanese chemical industry was nowhere near as advanced as that of Germany, the USA, or Britain. And as the war progressed, and American aircraft pounded the plants that produced the paints and their ingredients, the quality of the paints deteriorated even further. It is widely known that Japanese paint had trouble even sticking to the aircraft later in the war. If they couldn't get it to stick, why

not also assume they couldn't mix the colors exactly either? And even today, if you get a bottle of model paint, and then get another bottle of the same color from the same paint manufacturer, but from a different batch, you can often see differences in the hues between the two. This with modern, computer-assisted mixing equipment.

Finally, what about shortages of entire colors? It seems clear from my readings, as well as those of Jacob Russell, that as the war deteriorated for the Japanese, aircraft began to leave the factories either partially, or fully unpainted. With planes lasting sometimes just days at the front, why waste time painting them, since they would be destroyed in combat before they had time to deteriorate due to the elements?

You can also manufacture planes at a faster rate if you don't spend time painting the components. And if due to paint shortages some aircraft went unpainted, why not make a logical assumption, and believe that some aircraft were painted in non-regulation colors, yet colors that were in existence for painting aircraft? So even if Ki-84s were usually painted a gray color in the cockpit, couldn't it be possible, even likely, that if this gray paint was in short supply, that another widely used cockpit color, Aotake, which might have been plentiful for whatever reason, could have been substituted? Certainly makes sense to me. And since much of the evidence has been destroyed, a logical assumption is hard to disprove. And that makes it good enough for me.

So my Ki-84's cockpit is Aotake, Jacob Russell's is gray, and yours when you finally get around to building it, can be green perhaps? "Close enough is good enough" when it is a hobby you are referring to. Just my opinion, but we aren't dealing with brain surgery here, or global warming. And in my opinion it isn't important enough to risk offending someone by criticizing his or her efforts in a leisure time pursuit, is it?

Why I Can't Finish a Model (Procrastination)

by Keith Laird

I attended a self-improvement class that included an hour-long video on procrastination. All of us in the club have a problem finishing a modeling project. We all have our reasons. See if what I have listed includes your fears.

Fear of Failure

This usually equates to "I am not good enough to build/paint and I might mess it up if I do." What is the worst thing that can happen?.....Not much. We learn by doing. If you make an error in construction or painting learn from it. Find out what you did wrong and either redo it, or if it is too far gone, build another one. Most of us have a mountain of kits. The kits that I totally blow become conversions or spares sources.

The club members are resources and friends who are here to help everyone learn new techniques, and solve problems they encounter while modeling. Here's one tip I got from a good friend: Look at the kit before you start and make plans either on paper or in your head regarding how you are going to build the kit, what will be easy and what will be hard to do. Take baby steps if you feel over whelmed by the task.

Self Discipline

You have to want to build and complete the kit. If you do not allow yourself modeling time without a bunch of distractions, you won't get it done. You may not even get started. The pile of kits keeps growing.....

Perfection Paralysis

As much as I would like to produce an exact replica of whatever subject I am building at the time, (the Star Trek

replicator, as far as I know, is still science fiction), I am only going to build what I can afford, have room for, have the reference material for, and which match the current level of skill that I possess. This is a hobby. It is for fun and relaxation. I build for my enjoyment and not to hunt trophies. When I first came to IPMS I was intimidated by the beautiful craftsmanship in the models that I saw. I told myself I could never bring a model to show until I was as good as those guys. It never occurred to me that we all do not start out producing masterpieces. Some folks have a gift and the skills come easier, but practice and patience makes for a good job. No matter how much time you devote to a model, there is a point where you need to stop. If you don't, you won't ever finish a kit and you may even ruin all the work you put into it by going "A Bridge Too Far."

Fear of Success

This happens when you have finally achieved a certain level of excellence and start winning ribbons, or receiving positive comments from your fellow modelers on your work. Be proud, but be humble, and do not forget the path you traveled to completing great models. You do not need to be afraid to pass on tips and techniques about how you achieved your goal to produce a nice model. As I see it, you can now return the kindness you were shown by your fellow modelers who shared their techniques and ideas when you were struggling.

Correction

Well, perhaps not a correction, more of a clarification. The excellent photos from the October meeting featured in the last newsletter were taken by **Terry Moore**.

Thanks to all the club members who wrote articles for this issue. It's much appreciated.

ICM 1/48th Scale Spitfire Mk.IX

by Andrew Birkbeck

The Spitfire Mk.IX was built in larger numbers than any other variant except the Mk.V. Despite this statement, those who manufacture kits in 1/48th scale have ignored it, until recently that is. Last year we were given a Mk.IX from Occidental of Portugal, later re-released by MPM (with additional resin and etched bits I believe). Despite Occidental's first kit (a T-6 Texan) being a very nice kit, the follow up Spitfire kit was universally panned as being very poor in outline, simply not worth building if accuracy meant anything to you.

Detail's book covering the same aircraft. Herewith my initial findings.

Firstly, let me point out my philosophy on modeling. Simply put, my aim is to find the best quality kit of a given subject and, if necessary, add an aftermarket set to improve the basic kit. Adding the aftermarket set must be "worth it." By which I mean there must be a very noticeable improvement in the look of the finished model, for the extra work of adding the set to be worth my time. However, if the original kit is not of high quality to begin with, I won't bother with the subject at all. My modeling interests are so wide that I have literally hundreds of superb kits to work with, and no subject is that important to me to justify working with a poor quality kit. Still with me?

the Mk.IX. The optional parts include three different groupings of underwing armament: rockets and two types of bombs, with appropriate carrying racks.

In my opinion, there are some inaccuracies in the kit parts. Firstly, the two outer wing machine guns are "missing." By which I mean there are no holes for the bullets to exit the wing! This is despite the openings being correctly depicted on the box top painting. The exhaust stubs are also incorrectly shaped; again, the box top painting shows the shape correctly. The spinner is too pointed according to photos in the Aero Detail book. And strangely, the spinner has a raised panel line, whereas the rest of the kit's parts are all engraved. My spinner tip also looked like someone had taken a Dremel tool to it, being badly gouged. The control column has a square handgrip, where the photos show it to be oval. A little sandpaper to round this off, and you are set. The seat is also different in outline versus the one in the Aero Detail pictures **and** drawings. The engine, while detailed, is underscale. This because of the toolmaker's need to make the fuselage panels enveloping the engine area not even close to scale thickness.

The decals, while commendably thin, are out of register on my example. There are six different schemes, one of them inevitably being a Wing Commander J. Johnson bird, along with one example each from a Polish and Czech RAF squadron, together with three other RAF birds. All of these were aircraft flown by aces. Instructions are adequate, no more. Which is a pity given the huge number of parts (130+) and options in this kit.

So where does this all leave us? Well, short of waiting for Hasegawa or Tamiya to try a Mk.IX, this is the kit you will have to build if you want a Mk.IX Spitfire in 1/48th scale. In general outline, it appears accurate. You know there are bound to be multiple firms about to produce aftermarket sets for this kit. Hopefully they will include a new spinner and exhaust stubs. The missing wing machine guns are easily



So this kit from ICM, when announced, caused quite a stir. After all, they had already produced a very nice 1/48th MiG-3, and a Yak-7/9 series, each release an improvement over the previous, and all being quite acceptable. So when the Spitfire Mk.IX finally hit the shelves, to a chorus of "Tamiya quality in every way" from at least two reviewers I read, I couldn't wait for it to arrive here in Seattle. And I duly picked mine up at the November IPMS Seattle meeting, along with a borrowed copy (thanks Ted) of Aero

ICM's Spitfire appears to me to be a worthwhile kit, with one **major** reservation. More about this at the end of the review. For basing my opinion on information provided in Aero Detail's new book *Spitfire Mk.VI-XVI*, as well as discussions with a friend of mine who knows a fair bit about Spitfires, this kit is quite accurate in outline. It therefore is the best Spitfire Mk.IX now available. It is also very well detailed, with a 30-part Merlin engine, a well-detailed cockpit interior, and optional parts to build four different sub-variants of

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Academy 1/72nd Scale WW.II Ground Vehicle Set

by Glen Broman, IPMS Quad
Cities

This release from Academy includes a Jeep, Kubelwagen, and Kettenkrafrad plus 55 gallon fuel drums, large and small boxes, and American and German style jerry cans. The kit comes packaged in three bags. One contains the Jeep and Kubelwagen. Another contains the Kettenkrafrad, fuel cans and boxes plus clear parts. The third bag contains the decals. The parts are cleanly molded with no visible flaws in a light gray color. Academy provides a nice touch for the detail crowd with engines for each vehicle, allowing the modeler to open hoods and trunks and show off some

model is assembled. I used Tenax-7R liquid glue, which reacted well with the plastic. I had very few problems with parts fit and placement. A pair of tweezers does come in handy, especially on the suspension components. I recommend a quick check of alignment of the leaf springs before you put the chassis aside to dry. The Jeep body assembles easily and is a press fit onto the chassis. The only visible ejector pin mark on the Jeep was encountered during this stage; it's on the upper cushion of the back bench seat. This is highly visible and must be filled and sanded to look good. The only fit problem I had on the Jeep was the hood. I had to do some trimming to make it fit. Mine was too long and too wide. The only other problem I had was the windshield. Although fit isn't the problem, appearance is. I'm not a rivet counter, but I do believe

that a model should look like the real thing. In this case, the windshield looks wrong. When I compared the kit windshield with reference photos, the lower part

side body pieces is fair, but looks good if care is taken during assembly. I cleaned up all of the parts for the Kubel and built the entire kit in one sitting. There are a few stages during construction where you will have to make adjustments, primarily around the hood and trunk. You want a little give left in the parts when you get to this stage to get all of the body parts aligned. Overall the fit is even better than the Jeep. I painted my Kubelwagen in an Afrika Corps scheme using AeroMaster paint.

The Kettenkrafrad has about fourteen parts and cleans up and assembles very easily. Once again you get a choice of clear or gray engine cover. The Kettenkrafrad assembled with no problems at all. The boxes provided in the kit clean up fast but the drums have some unsightly mold seams on the sides along with a seam left after the sides are glued together that will require filling and sanding to remove. I put the boxes and barrels in the spares box for a future project and did not paint them. The Kettenkrafrad was also finished in a desert scheme. Overall, these models assemble easily and look good straight from the box. They will also provide a good base for the detailer to work from.



engine work. The engines are a bit basic, but there is ample opportunity for detailing the engines, if you are so inclined. Academy also provides the option of clear hoods and engine covers so you can see the engines once the models are built. Identical parts molded in gray are also provided, so if you chose not to use the clear parts, they will make a welcome addition the spares box.

The instructions are clear, and I had no problem following them. No history is provided in the instructions on these vehicles, only vehicle specifications. Oddly enough, the instructions refer to the Jeep as an "Allied Light Utility Vehicle." I started by assembling the Jeep. Parts clean up was very easy and ejector pin marks are generally were they can't be seen once the

of the windshield appears to be too high while the glass area is too short. It also has a molded on rifle holder which looks just like a molded on rifle holder. It can be sanded off, or you can do what I did. I placed the hood down, and then covered it with a tarp made of tissue paper treated with a solution of water and white glue. Canvas covers for the windshield glass were fairly common in the field. In some cases, the windshield was removed altogether. The .50 caliber machine gun and gas can were left off until painting was complete. I painted the Jeep using Model Master Olive Drab and completed the Jeep with a little light weathering.

The molding on the Kubelwagen is even better than the Jeep. There are no visible ejector pin marks anywhere. The fit of the

Antenna Problems

by Scott Vomacka, IPMS Central
New Jersey

Do you ever find yourself breaking off aircraft antennas and pitot tubes because you forgot they were there, or you didn't see them during construction? Before you start assembling the model, paint the antenna(s) or pitot tube(s) in a highly visible color. Use colors like yellow with red stripes, red with orange stripes, or orange with silver stripes. These highly visible colors will catch your eye, so that you will not accidentally break off the delicate piece when assembling the model. When the model is finished, simply paint these parts in the appropriate color.

The Russian Air Force Museum at Monino

by Tim Nelson

During August 2000, I was fortunate to have the chance to visit Moscow on a business trip. My job as a Boeing flight operations engineer involves working with customer airlines to keep 'em flying. I was recently assigned the two major airlines based in Moscow, Aeroflot and Transaero. My first visit to these airlines was an adventure, highlighted by not one, but two visits to the Russian Air Force Museum at Monino.

Monino is a small town about an hour's drive east of Moscow, past the dachas that Muscovites flock to on the weekends. In the woods near the town lies the Yuri Gagarin Flight Academy, home of the museum. It is not possible for a foreigner to drop in, but my airline friends had made prior arrangements.

My first visit was with two engineers from Aeroflot on a gray, rainy Wednesday. We were greeted by a retired Soviet Air Force general, who gave us a wonderful walking tour of the museum. All of his narration was in Russian, translated by my Aeroflot friends, who also translated my questions for the general. The general was an Il-2 Stormovik pilot from the Great Patriotic War (WW2), shot down three times, and a recipient of the highest Soviet honor, the

Hero of the Soviet Union. He fought on all fronts of the war in the east. I would have loved to have more time to simply talk with the general, but our time was limited and we had a museum to see.

The first section of the museum we explored was the indoor World War 2 hall. Several famous Soviet types are on display here, including the Il-2, Polikarpov I-16, MiG-3, Yak-9, and the La-7 (Fig. 1). The La-7 is claimed to be the last mount of the highest scoring Soviet ace, Ivan Kozhedub.



Fig. 2 – M-50 “Bounder”, the supersonic bomber that traumatized the West after appearing in the 1961 May Day parade. Only 2 were built.

The WW2 hall transitions into a Cold War gallery with models and artifacts of the late 1940s through the 1960s. Fragments from Francis Gary Powers' U-2 were on display, as well as ejection seats and g-suits from early jet fighters. One display was devoted to the Soviet Air Force contribution to the North Korean effort in the Korean War, which included flying combat missions.

We made our way from there to the outdoor display area. I had seen some photos of the Monino museum, but was still unprepared to see the huge collection of Soviet aircraft, many of which were formerly secret, parked before me. Amidst the acres of wildflowers and weeds were machines such

as the giant Mil-V12 double rotor helicopter, the Myasishchev M-50 “Bounder” (Fig. 2), and rows of MiGs (Fig. 3), Sukhois (Fig. 5), and Yaks.

Probably my favorite aircraft at Monino is the incredible Sukhoi T-4/100 (Fig. 4). This aircraft was a Soviet response to the American XB-70, and shares some design features. The big Sukhoi has a droop nose for low speed visibility. For the life of me, it appears there is no visibility at all (except maybe straight up) when the nose is faired for high-speed flight. I was told this aircraft was painted black during its flight test program in the early 1970s, a sight that must have been menacing indeed.

Some civilian types are represented at the museum, the most famous being the Tupolev Tu-144 supersonic transport. The civilian version of the Tu-95 “Bear”, the Tu-114, is there with its eight counter-rotating propellers. The museum's example was supposedly Khrushchev's personal transport. Adjacent to the Tu-144 “Concordeski” is the MiG-21I (Fig. 6), a MiG-21 modified with delta wings for test purposes.

One-of-a-kind gems like this are common throughout Monino. A derelict Ekranoplan ground effect vehicle sits on the perimeter of the museum grounds. The bizarre Myasishchev M-17 Stratosphera high altitude reconnaissance airplane, looking like a cross between a U-2 and a RB-57F, rests quietly in wacky Aeroflot markings. Record setting prototypes such as the Ye-152M (“MiG-21 on steroids”) sit side by side with exotic vehicles such as the Spaceplane (Fig. 7).

There is a hangar on the grounds with more aircraft inside, including an Ilya Muromets replica, the gorgeous Tupolev An-25 that flew from Moscow to California in the 1930s, a Sopwith Triplane, an Il-10 “Son of Stormovik” used in the Korean War, and other types.



Fig. 1 - WW2 Hall, La-7 allegedly flown by top-scoring Soviet ace Ivan Kozhedub.



Fig. 4 – The awesome, all-titanium, Mach 3 Su T-4/100, or “XB-70ski.”

All of the big Soviet bombers appear at Monino with the exception of the “Black-jack” (unless it was hiding somewhere). I grew up in dread of some of these machines, so it was quite a thrill to be able to kick the tires of a Tu-22M “Backfire” bomber (Fig. 8), up close and personal.

The museum does not ignore American contributions to Soviet aviation. Among

U.S. types on display are a P-63 Kingcobra, a B-25 Mitchell, an A-20 Havoc, a Piasecki helicopter, and the famous Tupolev Tu-4. Oh yeah, that last one isn’t really American, but it’s as close to a B-29 as the Soviets could make it!

Many of the airplanes at Monino are in varying states of disrepair. The museum doesn’t have much money for facilities,

maintenance, or preservation, and the extremes of Russian seasons are not kind. It is sad to see the deterioration of some of these birds, sitting out amongst the weeds, a few wild dogs and cats roaming around them. This only slightly dampens the thrill of seeing these exotic Soviet flying machines.

Having been once, three pilots from Transaero took me back to Monino three days later. This was on a sunny Saturday. It was great to have the opportunity to revisit some airplanes, take some better photos, and notice some things I missed the first time. And to do so while remaining dry the whole time. One of these Transaero friends, Victor, is a former Tu-16 “Badger” pilot.

It was amazing to me, an American working for a company responsible for much of the U.S. military arsenal, to stroll through this place and share a common love of aviation with Russians whom I now consider friends. A few years ago, it would not have been possible. I look forward to visiting Moscow, and hopefully the Monino museum, again.

If you have a chance to visit Russia, I highly recommend seeing the museum at Monino. It won’t be easy unless you have



Fig. 3 – MiG Row. Every significant MiG jet fighter, from MiG-9 at the far right to MiG-31 out of view to the left, is represented here.



*Fig. 5 – Su-7 variant on Sukhoi Row. Yes, it has skis. Runways?
Who needs ‘em?*

some local connections, but it can be done with some homework and preparation. The Monino web site has information on how to apply for permission.

Resources for those interested in learning more about the Monino museum include the following:

-Me. Please ask if you have questions or wish to see my photos.

-The official web site of the museum, http://www.infoart.ru/avia/company/monino/e_monino/. It has lots of photos of the collection.

-A private web site, <http://monino.8m.com>, which contains many photos and links to other Monino web sites.

-*Monino, The Russian Air Force Museum*, by Colin W. Prentice, Airline Publishing Ltd. A decent book with good photos, but already getting a little out of date.

-Schiffer Books also publishes a book on Monino, which I have not seen.



Fig. 6 – MiG-21I, a delta wing test bed used during Tu-144 development.



Fig. 7 – Ye-152M (“E-166”, left) and Spaceplane. E-166 set numerous time-to-climb records in the 1960’s. The Spaceplane, or Aircraft 105-11, was an unmanned reentry vehicle that served as a testbed for the Soviet space shuttle, Buran. By the way, the actual Buran (which flew unmanned one time in 1988) is now an attraction at Gorky Park in Moscow. Developed as a sub-sonic analog to a larger orbital vehicle, Aircraft 105-11 was designed to determine stability, controllability and aerodynamic characteristics. The aircraft has a jet engine and could take off and land under its own power. It was also tested by releasing it from a Tu-95 bomber at around an altitude of 5,000m. Aircraft 105-11 flew several times between 1975 and 1978.



Fig. 8 – Tu-22M “Backfire” main landing gear, with formerly secret wide footprint bogies for operation on unimproved runways. As this photo was taken, my friend Sergei (a 737 pilot at Transaero) was saying, “Now that I have shown you this, I will have to kill you.”

Using a Food Dehydrator

by Chris Paris, IPMS Glue Brothers

Does your paint look a little foggy after airbrushing? Latent solvents can cause your otherwise perfect paint job dry to a haze. The haze is caused when the solvents you use to thin your paint for spraying remain trapped under the surface of your pigment. In a perfect world, these solvents escape and evaporate, leaving a hard and clear surface. When they remain trapped, your paint can appear soft and foggy.

One remedy to this situation is to use a home appliance food dehydrator. Choose a unit that will meet the scale of model you like to build, and be sure the unit operates around 110-115 degrees Fahrenheit. Modify the interior trays to hold your various parts by cutting the bottom out of some of the trays. Leave at least one tray intact, as this will be your bottom tray where you will place your parts.

Turn on your dehydrator when you are ready to begin spraying your model. When you are done spraying, the dehydrator should have reached its optimum temperature. Allow your model to air dry for about 15 minutes before placing it in the dehydrator. When placing your model in the dehydrator, be sure to leave space around the pieces for adequate ventilation, and of course, don't let the fresh painted surfaces touch the side walls. Place the lid on your dehydrator, and let your model "cook" for at least 3 hours. Curing times will vary depending on size and paint. It will be normal to smell the solvents and the enamel drying. When removing the pieces, allow them to cool before any handling. Once the curing process is complete, you can usually sand, polish or paint the surface of the model.

Scale Plans in Magazines - A Waste of a Good Tree

by Neil Scrimgeour, IPMS Rutland, UK

Recently I've noticed a trend for model magazines to print an increasing number of scale plans and I get the suspicion that they haven't got enough articles to print so they use plans to pad out the publication. From my point of view plans in model magazines are a complete waste of time.

Just how accurate is a set of plans? Unless they're taken from manufacturers' masters they're going to contain errors. Apparently John Adams gave a talk recently explaining how useless plans can be, especially if they've been made from photographs, and that's common sense when you think about it. And when someone produces a set of plans, is the middle of the pencil line the datum point or is it the left or right edge of the line? Of course, plans are useful to show a conversion or modification of a subject, and can also be used to show up glaring errors in a model's outline, but plans can only be used as a general guide at the best of times.

And if plans aren't accurate how can models be? I read a review where it was stated that the fuselage was 2mm too long...according to plans. Is this a wind up? Could you tell if a model had been shortened by 2mm just by looking at it? Do you see judges hover over models with vernier gauges and calipers? Let's get real here, if it looks right it is right. If you really feel the need to shorten a fuselage by 2mm then you're going to have to take into account how much difference paint thickness makes to the dimensions of a subject, both in real life and on a model.

Plans do have their place....in specialist books - Detail & Scale, Aerofax, Verlinden etc. If you buy a book on a subject then you expect to get plans and in fact you might buy the book because of them, but shoving plans in magazines is pointless.

And what of magazines who slavishly publish this stuff? I stopped subscribing to *Scale Models (International)* a few years ago because that's what they ended up doing, month after month of plans, it even got to the stage they were publishing Spitfire plans. I mean, just how many more plans do we need on that subject? And what happened to *Scale Models*?

More Tips and Tricks

by IPMS Kalamazoo Scale Modelers

Glue Residue on Clear Plastic - Use an automotive car polish (for removing scratches), such as Novus, to remove the remaining glue residue.

Old Dry Transfer Lettering - Rub the back surface of the transfers sheet with Mineral Spirits. Seems to revitalize the glue.

Plastic gloves / Latex - Keeps fingerprints off the model, and paint off of fingers.

Well nut - (Plumbing - used to cap a pipe) can be used on a drill so tires can be sanded.

Mixing paint - Pudding/jello cups, orange juice can tops, old business cards, lids from film cans...

Clogged paint lids - When the lids for bottles (ModelMaster, Aeromaster) get clogged with paint, they can be replaced with tops from a 20 oz or 2 liter bottle.

Paint Brush Holders - Straws can be used for paint brush holders.

Bamboo skewers for shish kebobs can be used for mixing paint (it wipes off). It can be used to scrape paint as it is soft and will not scratch plastic.

What kind of paint did I use? - Write on the model plans the type of paint used in case you wish to do touchups later.

Toko 1/72nd Scale LaGG-3 Series 1, 5, & 11

by Clarence E. Wentzel, IPMS
Kalamazoo Scale Modelers

I was at the Old Guard hobby shop a year or so when I found a kit of the LaGG-3, a Russian World War II fighter, produced by Toko from the Ukraine. I have a couple of their kits of the Il-2 Stormovik and had been favorably impressed. The LaGG-3 was one of the most important Soviet aircraft of the war, but has never been offered in a good kit. Based on my favorable impression of the Il-2, I readily picked up the LaGG.

The LaGG-3 was an early offering from the Lavochkin design bureau, being built from 1940 through 1942. It was mostly wood and was only a marginal design but it did give the Russians a modern fighter to throw into the fray. The Russian pilots were not too happy with the LaGG-3. They deciphered the abbreviation 'LaGG' as 'Lakirovanny Garantirovanny Grob' ('Varnished Guaranteed Coffin') due to its inferiority to Luftwaffe's Bf 109. The airplane did, however, give the Lavochkin group experience that would lead them into their next generation of fighters, their La-5 and La-7 models which were much more competition to the Germans.

Upon opening the kit, I found that five different decal schemes were provided. On looking further, five different versions of the LaGG-3, series 1, 5, 11, 35, and 66, can be built. The company included extra parts to accurately represent each version. There are two wing upper panels, three different exhaust systems, three different noses, two spinners, three rudders, three horizontal stabilizers, two radio antennas, two canopies, and alternative fixed and retractable tail wheels. What a great effort to ensure accurate models! Other companies would have either ignored the differences or else told you to modify some parts according to your needs. In addition, Toko have provided a fairly detailed cockpit interior that eliminates the need for aftermarket parts. Even the instrument panel decal comes in three

different variations according to the model that you build.

The key questions were how accurate is the kit and how well does it go together? Well, for the first part, I checked the kit against the references that I have on the airplane; *LaGG Fighters in Action*, *Eagles of the East - Fighting Lavochkin* and *Soviet Aces of World War 2*, and the kit looks and measures to be accurate. For the second part, I give the kit an acceptable rating but you need to take some care to get a good model.



I chose to build the series 1 model in the markings of L. Galtchenko from the Karelian front. I found that the interior and the basic fuselage went together well. I did not encounter any warpage of the fuselage parts as has been reported elsewhere. The wheel wells, parts 34 and 54, add a nice touch but do need trimming to make fuselage and upper wing fit well. You need to sand the upper wing joint in order to get a good fit with fuselage. I found that some filler was needed at the wing to fuselage joint, the rear of the upper cowl, and the front of the lower wing to fuselage joints. The design of the tail wheel opening is not clear. I assume from the pictures that part 35 is for Series 1, 5, and 11 and parts 36 for series 35 and 66. The instructions indicate that the pitot tube is part 68 and it is mounted below the wing for series 35 and 66 models and to the front of the wing for series 1, 5, and 11 models. The part would have to be modified to fit to the front of the wing and in any case looks to be too thick. I used brass rod for my pitot tube. Finally, the prominent wing root air intakes need to be opened up. These could be painted black I suppose, but it is an easy modification to make and really enhances the final look of the model.

The directions of the kit call for the model to be painted in a grass green and black green color scheme with an aircraft blue undersurface and a white spinner. This corresponded to the profile of Galtchenko's aircraft in the book *Soviet Aces of World War 2* from Osprey Aircraft Publications. There is, however, a web site, Russian VVS Modeler's Resource Page at www.oz.net/~xopowo/VVS/vvs.htm, devoted to Russian aircraft and markings of the Second World War and they are not very complementary to the Osprey book. They indicate that the aircraft should be painted in a medium green and black scheme and they suggest that the spinner could be yellow. I used Testors Modelmaster Medium Field Green, F.S. 34095, Floquil Engine Black, and Aeromaster no. 9074, Russian Light Blue for the exterior colors. The interior was painted in Neutral Gray except for the rear armor plate which was painted Duck Egg Blue.

I was impressed with the fact that the model comes with the cooling outlet panels open. These are parts 33 and 23 or 24. When have we seen a P-51 Mustang model with the cooling outlet panels open? They even provide a radiator to fill the open space in the belly of the model but I missed that part during assembly and had to install a small piece of sponge to fill my model. In spite of the minor problems, I feel that the final result is a very realistic looking model of this significant aircraft. I will be buying more of the kits and making more of the series. Well recommended.

Note - Word out of the Ukraine is that the Toko company is getting out of the plastic model business. Stock up on these kits while they are still available. [Since this review was written a few months ago, the Toko molds have been picked up by Eastern Express, and most, if not all, of the Toko WW1 kits are available again under that imprint. Their WW2 kits, however, including the LaGG-3, have yet to reappear. The team that was responsible for the Toko molds continues to release new kits under the name Rodin, in boxes identical in design to the old Toko boxes. – ED]

Tamiya 1/72nd Scale Spitfire Mk.I

by Andrew Birkbeck

The Spitfire in 1/72nd has been well covered by the kit manufacturers over the years. While long in the tooth, Airfix's Mk.I and Mk.V are both fairly accurate in outline, and Hasegawa's Mk.VII thru IX are very nice indeed. Fujimi's Mk.14, while expensive, is also very nice, while Academy did

goes for \$9.50 in Japan, which I would say is fair for a kit of this quality and size. Still, five years ago, Fujimi came out with their Spitfire Mk.14, and it was \$30! Perhaps the Tamiya kit is a bargain after all!

One final note. The kit comes with decals for an aircraft from "601 Squadron"; the example depicted actually belonged to 610 Squadron.



a credible job with the Mk.14 at a lesser price. And for the late Marks, as well as the Seafires, you have the Ventura kits: limited run, expensive, on the difficult side to build, but incredibly accurate in outline.

So along comes Tamiya with a state of the art Spitfire Mk.I to replace the Airfix version (and the lesser Hasegawa one for that matter). My initial impression is that the kit is very accurate in outline, being a downsized version of the same firm's excellent 1/48th kit. It is also a simple kit, with two fuselage halves, three wing parts, and a handful of smaller items. When cut from their sprues, these parts manage to fill about 10% of an already small kit box. All for "only" \$16.50. I think Tamiya America is really pushing its luck with the new prices on these 1/72nd kits. Their new F4U Corsair is even more, at \$22! The Spitfire

ICM Spitfire IX

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fixed. And replacement decals won't be a problem. Just take your time test fitting the parts, as if ever there was an over-engineered kit, this is it. I will state for the record that ICM's toolmakers and designers, while trying very hard, simply don't have the skills of their counterparts at Tamiya. Therefore, with so many parts, one will need to carefully test fit and trim or add where necessary.

And now for my **major reservation** about this kit: simply put, mine is a piece of crap, in terms of quality of molding. There are sink marks **everywhere**. Where a part has

detail on both sides, one side or the other (or both in some cases) has the detail destroyed by huge sink marks. And where there is detail on an interior wall, such as the fuselage halves around the cockpit area, then the exterior has a huge sink mark. And these problems seem to be widespread, as checking on the Internet modeling chat forums, scores of others have reported similar problems or worse. ICM has had a major quality control problem with this kit, and so my advice is to buy your copy from a local retailer who is willing to let you open the kit to check the parts, before you plunk down your money. I have written to ICM/USA with my story, and they have promised to send me a more cleanly molded copy. If they do, then I will happily sit down and build this kit.

Preznotes

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will **never** release a kit of either of these subjects and so it comes down to the small kit guy to do it in a medium that can be accomplished in one's own garage. They are hand made and no two are exactly alike. Depending on mold life, production run, and the interest in the subject matter, you may not see too many of them at the next meeting or contest. Another thing is that once you have the parts cleaned up and ready to go, assembly is relatively fast, since, in most cases, you have fewer parts to assemble. They are somewhat like the Amodel kits that Bill Osborn builds and brings to every meeting: Interesting subject matter, a challenge to build, and they draw a lot of attention. Try one.

See you at the meeting,

Terry

2001 IPMS Seattle Dues Renewal

After all the hoopla about 2000, it is about gone. It is time to remind you to pay your IPMS Seattle 2001 dues.

I will ask Robert to include this dues form in both the December and January newsletters.

As is our usual practice, everyone on the 2000 roster will receive the January issue. If you have not renewed by the February mailing, you will **not** receive that and subsequent issues.

You can renew by mailing the form and a check for \$24, made out to "IPMS Seattle", to Norm Filer at the address on page two of this newsletter. Or you can bring the form to either the December or January meetings. Please be very careful when filling out the form. Many of our returned newsletters are the result of my poor interpretation of handwritten address information.

IPMS Seattle 2001 Dues Form

Full Name _____

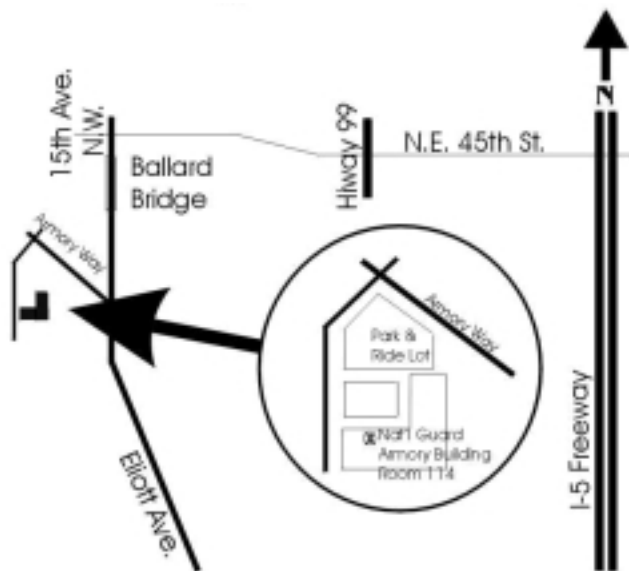
Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone (Area Code) () _____

E-mail address (optional) _____

Meeting Reminder



Saturday, December 9 10 AM - Bring things to eat and drink!

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.