

Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
November 2005

PREZNOTES



Two of the projects on my bench are a Spitfire and Hurricane from two totally different eras. The Airfix Hurricane Mk. I is nearly a generation removed from the Academy Spitfire XIV. It is truly amazing how models have changed over time. The Hurricane is relatively simple in comparison to the Spitfire kit. For example, the cockpit of the Hurricane consists of a seat, bulkhead, instrument panel, stick, and some minor side wall detailing whilst the Spitfire cockpit has a multitude of finely detailed parts including the seat, seat frame, stick, rudder pedals, instrument panel, control linkages, oxygen bottles, throttle quadrant, bulkheads, and much more. The external detail is raised on the Hurricane and engraved on the Spitfire. The parts fit on the Spitfire is near perfect requiring no filler putty at all. The seams were sanded smooth. I used a bit of white glue to fill the wing/fuselage joins but that's about it. The Hurricane, however, is an entirely different matter. The model requires generous amounts of filler putty, considerably more than I remember using on the last half dozen Tamiya kits I've built. I don't remember ever assembling an Airfix kit that did not require the use of copious amounts of putty. The only other kits I recall (that I build, anyway) that need an assist from the 3M Blue Acryl are Monogram kits, especially their multi-engine subjects. I won't comment on some of those short run model producers as I haven't worked on anything but Accurate Miniatures, Tamiya, and Hasegawa lately. Perhaps, one of these days I've gotta start on of those Classic Airframes or Special Hobby kits that inhabit a fair amount of space in my garage o' kits.

In my younger years, I could stop a project in its tracks because of the amount of putty required. Nowadays it doesn't bother me as much, I just consider it a necessary evil and it's no longer an obstacle to the completion of a model.

Jill and I had been married a short time when she thought she would like to try a model. Her first (and only model) was a JoHan P-47. We went about the assembly very carefully, and then applied the putty to take care of the seams. Then I explained that she had to sand it off. "Why? I just put it on!"

That put an end to her first and only airplane model, although a few years later she entered it in a "procrastination" contest at one of our meetings. She won! Of course she made sure she had baked chocolate chip cookies before the contest and bribed the judges, but that's a story she can tell better than I. I keep trying to get her to try another model. The Tamiya P-51B in the garage is hers. However, the specter of having to fill and sand seams has not been erased from her memory, even though that kit probably is not going to require much, if any, filler at all. I keep trying to tell her that models have come a long way since those days nearly 30 years ago, that it's just not the same, even when I tell her that it doesn't even bother me any more.

Decals on the other hand...AARRRGGGHHHHHHHHH!

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Public Disclaimers, Information, and Appeals for Help

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

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

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

Upcoming Meeting Dates

The IPMS Seattle 2005 meeting schedule is as follows. All meetings are from **10 AM to 1 PM**, except as indicated. To avoid conflicts with other groups using our meeting facility, we must **NOT** be in the building before our scheduled start times, and **MUST** be finished and have the room restored to its proper layout by our scheduled finish time. We suggest that you keep this information in a readily accessible place.

November 12

December 10

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

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MPM 1/72nd Scale Lockheed Vega 5C "Shell No. 7"

by **Tim Nelson**

Several fine in-box reviews of the 1/72nd MPM Vega kits have been provided by Jim Schubert in various editions of *Internet Modeler* (see References). He previewed this particular kit in the October 2003 issue. I can't top his brief early history of the Lockheed company and the Vega, nor his thorough reference list, and I won't try. What I will do is provide a little history on the Vegas operated by the various Shell companies.

Shell owned and operated numerous airplane types during the 1930s. The airplanes were used as platforms for aviation fuel development, executive transport, a little racing, and plenty of good old-fashioned publicity. At that time, Shell was organized into three entities in the U.S.: Shell Oil of San Francisco, CA, Shell Petroleum of St. Louis, MO, and Shell Eastern Petroleum of New York, NY. John MacReady headed the aviation department of Shell Oil out of San Francisco and Jimmy Doolittle directed the Shell Petroleum aviation department out of St. Louis. The subject of this kit, "Shell No. 7", NC-13705, c/n 203, was the last of four Vegas acquired by Shell. A summary of Shell's Vegas follows (compiled from Refs 1 and 2):

Shell Petroleum Corp. (St. Louis)
Vega 5A Executive, c/n 108, mfd 1/30, NC 539M (purchased for Jimmy Doolittle, repaired after crack-up at Mitchel Field)

Shell Oil Co. (San Francisco)
Vega 5B, c/n 134, mfd ?/30, NC926Y (purchased for John MacReady, became Lituanica II)

Shell Oil Co. (San Francisco)
Vega 5, c/n 54, mfd 4/29, NC 657E, delivered to Alaska-Washington Airways (acquired by Shell in 1932, written off 4/33)

Shell Oil Co. (San Francisco)
Vega 5C, c/n 203, mfd 9/33, NC 13705 (subject of the MPM kit)

Shell operated a couple of other single engined Lockheeds in addition to the Vegas:

Shell Oil Co. (San Francisco)
Sirius, c/n 141, mfd 2/30, NC 349V (purchased for MacReady, damaged & scrapped by 12/30)

Shell Petroleum Corp. (St. Louis)
Altair, c/n 180, mfd 9/31, delivered to TWA, converted to Orion 9C, NR 12222, 6/32 (acquired by Shell, became the famous Shelllightning)

"It had snowed the night before and was very cold and windy. At daylight we loaded our things into the Vega and said our good-byes to a number of folks who had come to see us off, and I taxied out to the takeoff area. Previous rains had softened up the field and there were deep ruts, now frozen and snow covered, which had been made by aircraft wheels before the ground froze. I lined up and gave it full throttle. The takeoff roll seemed sluggish and I should have sensed something was wrong. After going a few yards, the wheels caught crosswise in a snowdrift. The door between me and the cabin where Joe [Mrs. Doolittle] and the boys were strapped in flew open and I fell backward. I thought Joe had opened it, which she had not



Jimmy Doolittle is one of my heroes, and quite possibly the greatest aviator of all time. However, one of the Shell Vegas (c/n 108, not the subject of this kit) was involved in one of his most embarrassing moments. The event occurred on February 16, 1930, at the beginning of his stint with Shell, in which he was flying his wife and kids from Mitchel Field, NY to St. Louis. In his autobiography (Ref 3), Doolittle retold the tale:

done. I hurriedly righted myself and continued the takeoff. The left wheel hit another snowdrift, and the sudden drag on the left side was more than the plane could take. The gear gave way and the Vega plowed into the frozen ground, careened sideways, ground-looped, and nosed up in the snow, causing damage to the left wing and propeller ... It seemed obvious that we had ended the flight this way because the Vega was overloaded. Those who wit-

nessed this scene say that the unique, unprintable language I used against myself and my stupidity was something they never expected to hear again...I called the Shell people in St. Louis to tell them what had happened and that I would be late reporting for work.”

Repairs cost \$10,000, relative to a purchase price from Lockheed of \$25,000. Doolittle and family traveled to St. Louis by train. A low point, albeit humorous, in an otherwise extraordinary career as pilot, aeronautical engineer, military leader, and corporate executive.

Now, to the build of the model of Vega c/n 203. I was compelled to build this kit for several reasons. First, the Lockheed Vega is unquestionably on the short list of the most significant airplanes of all time, with a long list of outstanding accomplishments. Second, the Vega is a personal favorite, not only because of its stellar history, but because of its elegant lines. Third, the colorful Shell livery promised to be a knockout. I'm sure there were other motivations, but these were enough to proceed.

The basic kit parts look good on the sprues, but several issues emerge when you start assembly:

- The passenger cabin floor is too wide and interferes with fit of the fuselage halves unless sanded down.
- The cockpit aft bulkhead and firewall need careful attention to ensure fit and alignment.
- The single piece injection molded canopy has some subtle but nearly uncorrectable molding flaws, which fortunately are less apparent on the finished model than the bare part.
- Landing gear struts are too long and appear almost as if the oleos are extended to their in-flight position. Using drawings in Ref 1 and the old IPMS/Quarterlies (see Jim's October 2003 review for full references), I estimated that about 2 mm should be cut from the main struts. Important! Cut from the bottom, not the top, where a nub makes a socket joint with a fairing on the fuselage.



- Landing gear side and drag strut placement is vague and must be treated with caution. Full strength and stability are not achieved until both these braces are installed. The thinness and brittleness of the struts is a deterrent to inserting pins to add strength, so I opted to assemble the struts prior to painting by using ProWeld for strong bonds. This scheme worked like a dream until I dropped the whole damned thing later, not once but twice.
- There are two small pins within the wheel pants for locating the wheel axis of rotation. Using these pins results in the wheels extending too far down and out of the pants, to my eye. I removed the pins and shoved the wheels as far as they would go inside the pant wells, which results in a more natural placement.
- Some reviewers have noted alignment issues with the cabin windows. Those reviewers were correct! Not only is the bank of windows higher on one side of the fuselage than the other, and the rearmost right side window out of kilter, the windows are misaligned fore and aft as well. These issues seem really objectionable when dry fitting the left and right fuselage halves, but correction struck me as a major

fun-killer and I let it go. (When the model is completed with wing installed, window alignment is much more subtle since there is no single view that facilitates left/right comparison. A high mounted wing has its advantages!)

- The exterior passenger cabin window frames are very pronounced and benefit from sanding down.
- Wing top and bottom fit is generally good, and the trailing edges are commendably thin, but I think the trailing edges still benefit from a bit of thinning.
- The shape of the elliptical horizontal tail surfaces appears too eccentric, and not quite right for the more oval shaped Vega tailplanes. I used them anyway. For a more accurate and natural look, I separated and repositioned the elevators and rudder.
- The kit engine suggests a Pratt & Whitney Wasp, but falls short in some of the details and will irritate those who get wrapped up in such things. It was good enough for me.

This particular Shell Vega incorporated several configuration features that differ from the kit parts. Here are some basic mods I made to replicate these features:

- Filled in the scribed port passenger door lines, and installed a starboard door. Since my scribing skills are, shall we say, still developing, I chose to use the spare door in the kit and carefully created an opening for it on the starboard side.

- This airplane may have featured an executive interior. I made a few changes to the kit cabin to render the apparent seat configuration typical of this more luxurious cabin. I chose various brown tones to suggest different leathers, and 'folded' a couple of seats as seen in some photos (see Ref 1). I added seat belts to all seats. For that final touch, I created a small typewriter for the desk in the forward cabin. Naturally, hardly a lick of any of this is visible in the completed model.

- I drilled a small hole on the right side of the engine cowl for a starter crank.

- The kit prop is a rather generic mishmash composite of several props and I replaced it with an Aeroclub Hamilton-Standard prop (Aeroclub P028). Some surgery was required to meld a brass shaft of the proper diameter to this prop.

- The engine exhaust stacks of this aircraft are cut square and not beveled, which was straightforward to correct.

- Some photos of this aircraft show a radio aerial running from the top of the wing to the vertical fin. I fabricated a mast from a pin and installed it based on photos of Amelia Earhart's Trans-Pacific Vega, which appears to have had a similar configuration.

- Most Vegas had landing lights installed in the lower wing, which rotated down for forward illumination when needed. This Vega had fixed landing lights in the wing leading edges, as well as small shields placed slightly inboard, to keep the glare out of the pilot's eyes. I filled the kit's scribed lights on the lower wing and fabricated new ones similar to those shown in photos.

I rendered the cockpit in a straightforward manner, using the kit parts with the exception of the fire extinguisher. I scratchbuilt a simple new one to replace the unconvincing one molded on the bulkhead. It must be said that cockpit

details are very hard to discern through the canopy on the finished model.

Fuselage fit required some seam-filling on the bottom, even after dealing with the cabin floor width problem. The biggest fit problem, however, is the junction of fuselage, canopy, and wing. My canopy



did not want to fair with the fuselage and my wing did not want to sit flush with the top of the fuselage. I spent significant time gingerly filing and sanding to remove the offending material. The most salient problem seemed to be the inboard facing surfaces of the wing leading edge, which butt against the sides of the canopy. I finally achieved a reasonable fit, but this hurdle was the least enjoyable part of the build. It should be noted that the canopy must be installed prior to wing join, or you will find yourself in a profanity-inducing conundrum similar to that experienced by Doolittle after cracking up at Mitchel Field.

An oddity of the kit's engineering is that the cockpit rear bulkhead extends upward into the wing volume through an oversized slot on the wing bottom, which leaves a sizeable opening after assembly. My sequence of assembly (painting first, then major joins as described below) meant that dealing with these orifices would be awkward at best. I left them as is since they are very hard to see unless you put your face on the table, but if you are

contemplating one of these kits, be forewarned.

Fit of the engine mount assembly leaves a large step at the joint in front of the cockpit, which requires significant filler. Later installation of the cowl presents a problem due to the scarcity of mating

surfaces and fit around the engine. Don't tell anyone, but my cowl is actually only held in place by the two bottom cylinders, which had to be filed down to allow the cowl to have the proper installed orientation. You may want to consider provisions to hold the cowl more positively.

Because of the challenges of this paint scheme, I chose to do most of the painting

prior to major assembly. I couldn't figure out a good way to paint and mask the wing and tailplane perimeters while all joined together. This approach actually worked pretty well, but you have to do much test fitting to ensure the finished assemblies go together at the end. For masking the curves, I cut yellow Tamiya tape into thin (approx. 1/16 in) strips to define the shape, then filled the rest in. For paints, I used Testors Model Master Insignia Red and Insignia Yellow with about 15% white added for scale effect, followed by Duracryl gloss.

The kit decals are absolutely first rate and almost bury themselves. I gave them a couple of coats of Duracryl gloss, with light sandings in between. I applied a little light weathering before the final semi-gloss coat.

A notable characteristic of Vegas and their single-engined Lockheed siblings was the rubstrips for the horizontal stabilizer. These metallic strips, often protected with a leather skin, ensured proper conformance

of the stab fairings with the curved fuselage as the stab traversed its range of travel. After some experimentation, the solution I found was to pre-scribe thin strips of clear Supercal decal stock, and then airbrush the sheet a leathery brown. The strips were then tediously trimmed and installed (48 in all). I think the effect is quite pleasant and adds significantly to the appeal of the model.

Final steps included installation of the kit's wing pitot probe (an aftermarket probe would be superior) and a small wire 'handle' for the new starboard door. I then rigged the aerial; I don't have extensive rigging experience and my glue blob which joins the horizontal run to the vertical run is larger than I'd like it to be. I set aside the kit's thick cabin window panes and treated the openings with MicroGlaze. My original intent was to render the sliding window halves of this Vega's fore-and aft-most windows, but in the end that contemplation yielded to other priorities in life: family, work, soccer practices, the dog, etc., etc.

Yes, there were numerous fit and alignment problems. However, this kit was an enjoyable build and it was very satisfying to finally extract a 1/72nd Vega from my workbench. Anyone interested in the single-engined Lockheeds of the "Golden Age" ought to enjoy this kit and its companion offerings from MPM. Bravo to MPM for producing them. Let's see more of these Lockheeds soon, as well as more aftermarket decal options for them. There is a pent-up demand for civil subjects from this era.

Special thanks to Tim Kalina, Jim Schubert, and others on the Wings of Peace discussion group for their great help with research (and encouragement) on this Shell Vega.

References

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[Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl www.internetmodeler.com for permission to use Tim, Gerry, and Norm's articles in this issue. - ED]



Marivox 1/72nd Scale SAAB 17

by **Bill Osborn**

What with all the articles and pictures of the restored SAAB 17, I thought I should build the model. After all it's a very straightforward W.W.II aircraft, with none of the add-ons that are stuck to the modern aircraft.

Upon opening the box, there are three light gray sprues about 7x9 in. filled with very well molded and finely engraved parts, and one clear one with thin windows and canopy. The decal sheet has enough markings for seven Swedish aircraft and four from other countries. This should have given me a clue as to what was to come. The instruction sheet is a single sheet 12x16, with the build directions on one side and the aircraft specs and some of the paint schemes on the other side. I say some because there are schemes for four aircraft on the back of the box.

Doesn't sound too bad yet does it? Well, let me tell you, there are more parts to this kit than most Hasegawa kits. Why you ask should this small single-engine airplane have all these parts? It's because Marivox gives you parts for every 17 that ever flew! There are parts for floats, skis, cowlings and anything else it takes to make any mark your heart desires.

Now, this may sound like a great idea, but it gets really complicated. The instruction sheet has sketches with lines going everywhere pointing to different parts for different aircraft. For a befuddled old man it's a bit overwhelming. There are three cowlings with two different engines, with two different exhausts. Three prop and spinner combinations, to say nothing of all the small add-ons that go to make the A, B, or C models.

There are separate parts for all the control surfaces, a cockpit floor with two seats, a rollover pylon, instrument panel, and

coming. You get a three-part machine gun, and parts for the wind-driven generator for the target tug version.

and discard all the rest, mark them with a red pencil on the drawing and hope you made the right choices.

I think the best way to build the model you want is to, first, figure out which one to build, then check off all the parts you need

Good luck.



Academy 1/72nd Scale North American P-51 Mustang

by Hal Marshman, Sr.

Yep, that's right; the old 1/48th scale builder did another of the wee ones, and is most pleased with the results. To begin with, the Allison-engined Mustangs are my own favorite versions of the pony bird. As a lad during and just after World War II, this is the only Mustang I had any knowledge of, it being a good many years before I knew of the -D model.

The elegant shape of the nose, to me, is one of the most esthetically pleasing features of the plane, with the shallow radiator being a second. I like the looks of that birdcage style canopy also, with the squared-off wing and tail tips blending in nicely with the rest of the design. During the war, there was a comic book I got every month, dealing with the air fighting in the Far East. The heroes had originally flown Tiger Shark (what else?) P-40s. At some point, they upgraded to Allison-engined P-51s. In place of the Shark markings, these fellas applied a white Pegasus style horse motif, with the horse covering the fuselage nose to tail, and the feathered wing design from wing root to tip. Just what would appeal to a seven or eight year-old kid. In any case, this may partially explain part of why I like these early-style Mustangs.

The Academy kit is molded in a moderately soft medium gray plastic, pretty much free of dimples and pin marks. The panel details are finely etched, and where necessary, the raised detail is crisp and prominent. Herein lies what I feel is the most troubling feature of the kit. The rudder and elevators on the early Mustangs were of fabric over frame construction. Academy has done a terrible job here, casting the framework detail as a scale six inches or so wide, and the shallow areas in between as deep rectangular-shaped hollows. I sanded mine smooth, but you could just as well go



ahead and fill them, and surface sand. Your choice.

The interior consists of raised sidewall detail, with separate seat, frame, back shelf radio package, floor, raised detail instrument panel, and control stick. All these features are well done, and nicely detailed. Substitute with aftermarket if you choose, but I did masking tape seat belts, and shaded and highlighted the kit-provided parts, and am reasonably satisfied. A separate radiator outlet door is provided, and if positioned in the wide open position, will reveal a well detailed individual radiator casting. Nice touch!

The main gear is pretty good, with well done solid wheels (no dimpling here either). Main gear inner and outer covers have raised detail proudly projecting from the covers. Good opportunity for more shading and highlighting. Did mine in Model Master non-buffing Aluminum, applied a black wash, and when cured, dry brushed more Aluminum.

The wheel wells are proper scale depth, and fully detailed. I did mine in MM Aluminum also, with black wash and dry brushing to accent the surface detail. The

rear main spar is painted Zinc Chromate Yellow. The tail gear doors are cast on to the fuselage bottom, in the open position. Tail gear itself is a nice jewel-like casting.

The spinner comes in two pieces, a front and rear, with the one-piece prop sandwiched in between. Exhausts are separate and pettily rendered. Cannon housings are cast as part of the upper and lower wing parts, with the barrels being a separate installation. The model is kitted as a photo recon bird, so a camera is provided to be installed behind the seat inside the left quarter window. As far as I can tell, photo recon planes had a hole in the quarter window for the camera lens, probably to eliminate reflections from the glass. This hole is not provided. The rest of the clear parts are a one piece separate hood, windscreen, gun sight, and landing light lenses. They are perfectly clear, and moderately thin. Realistically, I don't see how these parts could be cast any thinner. It would be a little extra work with the razor saw, if you wanted to display the canopy in an open configuration. Two radio masts are provided, the usual tall pointed mast, and the flattened tube style. Check your references for which to use on your particular choice.

There are no bombs or drop tanks provided, and I've seen no Allison-engined 'Stangs with droppable ordnance, except of course for the dive bombing A-36, and the later P-51A. Such may have been adapted later in the war, as some of these planes were still in use as late as the Normandy landings in June 1944.

Assembly of this model is pretty much straight forward and the parts fit well. I did very little sanding of seams, and didn't run into any construction problems.

The decals provided include markings for two subjects, one a North Africa bird with yellow surround stars and yellow wing stripes and US flag on the fin; the other, an Algerian-based plane with scorpion nose art, and faded star and bar insignia, with newly applied dark blue surrounds. Interestingly, the Algerian subject shows the individual code, white AC, applied over the yellow serial that was originally painted just aft of the fuselage star. Both Mustangs feature a red spinner, an identifying feature of North African-based fighter aircraft.

As a bonus, Academy includes a 1/72nd model of a WWII jeep. I believe the jeep kit has more parts than does the 'Stang. For those contemplating a diorama, this is a very handy inclusion.

There it is. Except for the tail control surfaces, I'd have no problem giving this kit high marks indeed. It was for me, a very enjoyable build.



Scratchbuilt 1/48th Scale Consolidated P2Y-3

by Gerry Nilles

The first steps taken to give the US Navy a monoplane flying boat with a single step hull occurred in the late 1920s. Although Consolidated had lost the competition to produce the first of these new generation flying boats, the XPY-1, to Martin, it did receive an order from the Navy to build a subsequent prototype based on that same XPY-1 design. This second NAF variation was designated the XP2Y-1, and differed mainly in that it retained a small lower wing which not only provided support for the stabilizing pontoons but also gave it a bit more lift as well as space for additional fuel tanks. Initially the P2Y-1 engines were mounted below the wing, but with the development of the XP2Y-2 prototype it was found that drag was significantly reduced when the engines were moved to the leading edge of the wing. The production version incorporating these and other changes became the P2Y-3. However, 21 of the original P2Y-1s were retrofitted with these same modification and then re-designated P2Y-2s. As it turned out the Consolidated offering became more successful than its Martin counterpart. Of course both companies went on to produce more advanced flying boats for the Navy, including the Consolidated PBY Catalina and the Martin PBM Mariner.

I am sure that the reason for scratch building a particular subject varies with each modeler. As for me I have always been a big fan of floatplanes and flying boats. It probably has something to do with the fact that I was born on and spent my early formative years in an island community that had only watercraft and seaplanes as its source of transportation to the outside world. But roots aside, flying boats and floatplanes still make for interesting scratch building subject matter mainly because they have been somewhat ignored by kit manufacturers, especially in the larger scales. So if you want to add



something other than the Monogram PBY or a variety of poorly done or very challenging vacuforms to your collection of 1/48th scale US Navy aircraft, you are left to your own devices.

First off, my goal is to assemble an extensive collection of US military aircraft, sort of my own miniature museum. To accomplish this, my approach to scratch building is to make it as easy and as quick as possible. Now I know some model builders believe that the more extensive the details, seen or unseen, the better the model. Perhaps this is true and maybe I am committing modeling blasphemy, but I feel that if you can't see it, why bother with it?

With that said, my first task in constructing my P2Y-3 was the acquisition of a good set of plans. Fortunately a friend of mine has both volumes of Paul R. Matt's beautifully done model drawings, which included the P2Y-3. Once I had these drawings enlarged to 1/48th scale I was ready to go. I have scratch built a number of different models over the years and have used several construction methods depending on visible interior requirements. In this case interior visibility included the cockpit area under the main canopy and the somewhat limited visibility into the

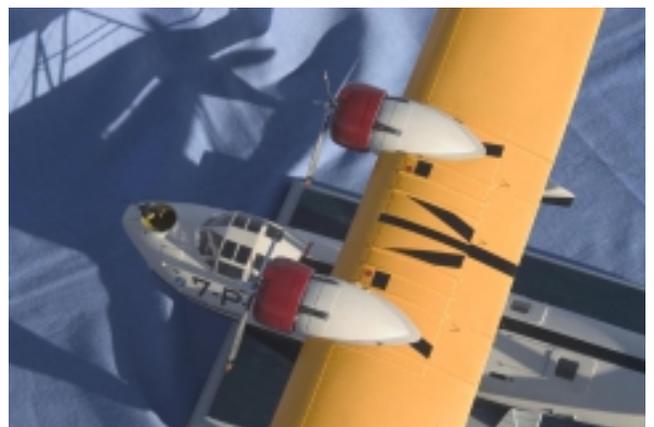
gunners' positions as seen through small hatch windows.

At this point I could go into how I built the fuselage, wings, vertical and horizontal surfaces, and other details, but seeing as how I did not photo document any of these steps it would be pretty hard to describe my building process with words alone. I will however say this much, the model is almost completely solid and is made out of a combination of sheet styrene and an industrial type of pre-cast high density polymer foam material. This material is very stable and can be cut and shaped with standard saws, woodworking rasps and files, and various grade of sandpaper. Depending on the density used some of this stuff can have a finished surface that is almost glass smooth. But be advised this material is a bit expensive. Evergreen and Plastruct styrene strips products were also used for various surface details.

As for things like the engines, props, cowlings, cockpit interior etc., I borrow from other kits as much as possible. In this case the Monogram B-17 provided the correct engines, as well as the rudimentary shapes for both the cowlings and props. The cockpit interior was built using parts

from the True Details PBY Cockpit Detail Set (TD48457). The nose gunner's 30-cal. mg is from the Accurate Miniatures SBD-2 kit. Markings are combination of Yellow Wings Decals and where necessary homemade on my own computer and ink jet printer. The entire model is painted using Tamiya Model Lacquers that I decanted, thinned, and then re-sprayed with my air brush.

I built this model primarily for my own collection, enjoyment, and the fact that there probably is not much chance of any manufacturer doing a kit of this aircraft soon, especially in this scale. Although I didn't track the time I estimate that I put somewhere between 150 to 200 hours into the model over a 16-month period. The techniques I used were not particularly exotic or complicated.



In-Box-Review, 1/16th Scale Tamiya Wehrmacht Tank Crewman, Afrika Corps

by Hal Marshman, Sr.

I just made purchase of the new and so far unheralded Afrika Korps Panzer enlisted man from Tamiya in 1/16th scale. I'll preface my commentary by saying that this appears to be the nicest figure to come from this source yet, and some of the earlier figures were very nice.

What you have here is the standard Tamiya box, openable from both ends. The box is decorated by a painting representing the subject as he would look in action. As usual, the assembly and painting instructions are on the reverse panel, with paint colors called out for Tamiya paints. The side panels show depictions of some of the accessories on one side, and some of his decorations on the other. Also shown are color renderings of a lizard.

There are two sprues in a buff colored plastic, one clear sprue, and a decal sheet. The main sprue has the basic figure parts and the other, the accessories. The clear sprue contains two sets of sand goggles. Why two? Looking closely, you will see that one set is opened out flatter than the other. This is because Tamiya provides three pieces of headgear; the ubiquitous "Afrika Korps" visored cap, a side cap (overseas cap), and the German style pith helmet. The pith helmet was seldom worn, but is a nice addition. Lozenges are provided for the Army style insignia applied to each side, and decals are included to apply to these - Army style eagle on the left, and German national colors on the other. Early issues of this helmet were in a pale tan color, while the later versions were in dark olive brown felt type material. The inside of both types were medium green, with tan leather head band. Tamiya is getting adventurous with the faces of their figures, and this one shows personality, with a broad grin, and

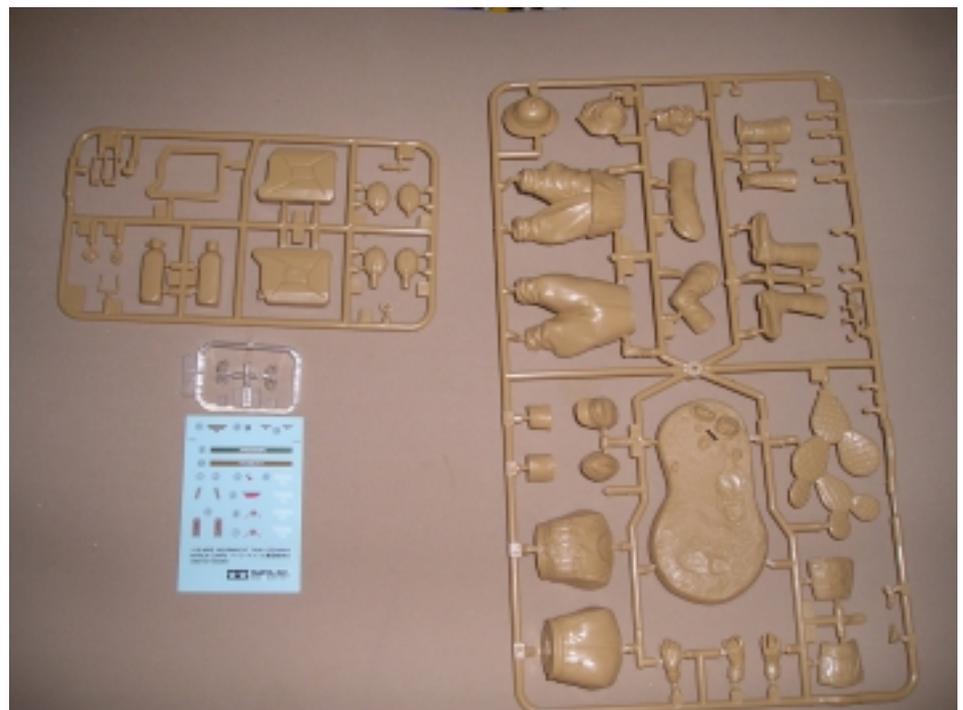
deep chin. The torso is in upper and lower sections, to be attached at the belt line. This is a good time to remind everyone that the belt was not leather, but cotton webbing in an olive green color. The tunic skirts are separate, as is the lapel and shirt collar part. The lapels include a cast-on death's head on each side, the insignia of the Panzertruppen in the desert. Two right hands are given, with one being appropriate for holding the canteen provided, while the other is posed to provide a place for the lizard (chameleon) to stand, as if the owner is inspecting same. Yep, the lizard is included. The footwear consists of the lace-up front, non-desiccating high boots typical of the Afrika landser. Tamiya includes two sets of shoulder straps, one representing a staff sergeant, while the other is smooth, and meant for the application of the staff sergeant strap decal.

From my point of view, this would allow you to paint a lower rank, such as private or corporal. Naturally, you'd also have to paint the proper left arm insignia of the lower rank you choose. There is a land-scaped base provided, with an attachable

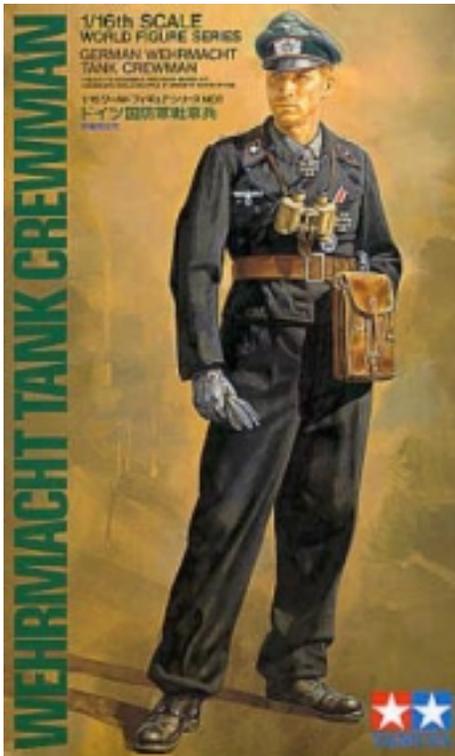
cactus. Don't recall ever seeing any cacti in pics of the African Campaign, but if those more knowledgeable on the flora of the North African desert can confirm it, so be it.

The second and smaller fret includes a multiple piece jerry can, a fresh water bottle, and two canteens, one with the cap off and separate cap (cup), the other with cap in place. Rounding out the sprue are an Iron Cross 1st Class, and a Panzer Assault Badge. There is no weaponry included.

Last, but far from least, Tamiya includes a decal sheet that provides all the necessary insignia, should anyone be disinclined to paint same himself. They even include the "Afrika Korps" cuff title worn on the lower right sleeve. Tamiya also includes a cuff title with the "Afrika" with palms legend. This was a campaign decoration, worn on the lower left sleeve. It was instituted in January, 1943, and the campaign concluded with the great surrender in Tunisia, in May of 1943. With the very tenuous supply situation, and the fact that the Germans were very much in retreat, it is



doubtful if any of these were actually sewn on to any Afrika Korps uniforms, but as with so many other German subjects, I'm certain there had to be exceptions. I personally, would save the cuff title for another post Afrika figure, such as the Panzer officer, or the Continental Infantryman. Don't forget, this also could be worn on a Luftwaffe uniform, if the owner had fulfilled the requirements.



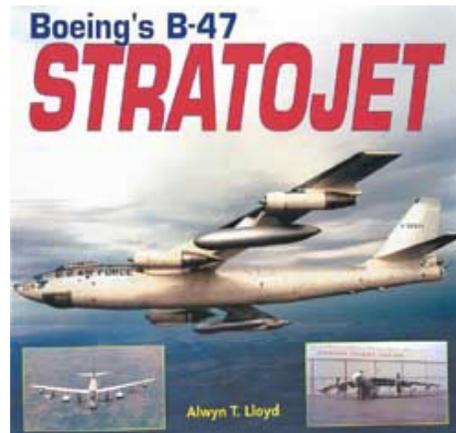
For those interested, these uniforms were not issued in a tan color, but an olive green shade. The intense African sun tended to fade them rapidly. As with so many other soldiers in the world, the average German soldier wanted to appear "salty". Such being the case, he'd bleach out parts of his issue uniform with among other things, anti-poison gas tablets. If you are using oils, the proper color can be mixed using Naples Yellow, and Paynes Gray in varying consistencies. More Paynes Gray can be added for shadow areas, and more Naples Yellow for the highlights.

In conclusion, this is a terrific figure, well executed and quite interesting. I would give it high marks, indeed.

Boeing's B-47 Stratojet by Alwyn T. Lloyd

reviewed by Norm Filer

The Stratojet has to be one of the most significant aircraft of the post-war period. Yet for some reason it does not seem to have drawn a great deal of attention from the historians. That oversight is clearly corrected by this book. This is not a casual effort by any stretch of the imagination. The author spent many years gathering personal interviews, production data, photos and drawings, and operational history.



As an avid aviation book collector, I tend to classify many of these books into two distinct areas.

1. Those that are a labor of love where the author spent a couple dozen years gathering and writing about a subject he very much cares about. When he is ready he tries to find a publisher who shares his passion.

2. The publisher commissions an author to write about a subject that will perhaps fill a void in that publisher's series of books, or that he thinks will enhance his sales. Usually these result in briefer, more general coverage that is designed to fit a specific format.

This one is clearly in the first category.

The B-47 served during the early years of the cold war and was the principal deterrent during the early jet age years. Due to the security restrictions placed on anything Strategic Air Command did during these early years, not a lot of information has been available. The author takes us on a long, well documented tour of SAC B-47 operations. His previous book *A Cold War Legacy-A Tribute to Strategic Air Command 1942-1992* lays a lot of the groundwork for the author's obvious knowledge of SAC operations and it clearly shows in this book.

Most of us are somewhat familiar with the "normal" SAC B-47 bombers, but little has been written about the other missions that utilized the airframe. All of that is well covered in this volume. There were an amazing verity of lumps, bumps, canoes, and odd items grafted on the basic airframe at different times for different missions and experiments. They are all described and illustrated in detail. What they were for, what they looked like, and even the project Code Names used to add the modifications and operate those special mission aircraft are covered.

Profusely illustrated with black-and-white and color photos, as well as drawings and extracts from various technical publications, this is a "must have" book for anyone interested in this significant cold war bomber.

As I read this book, I came to realize that the B-47 made huge contributions to the modern aviation scene. Without the B-47 there probably would not have been a B-52, 707 airliners, or the C-135/KC-135s we are so used to seeing today. Now that is indeed a significant impact!

Maybe this book will inspire you to drag that ancient and well-hidden Hasegawa kit out of the bottom of the closet. Not really a bad kit at all. Now you can detail it to your saturation point and put something really unusual on the shelf.

Diorama Construction, Part 13

by George Haase

(Continued from the June newsletter)

Method 2

For years, I have used an expanded version of Method 1 to paint the larger figures (1/32nd, 1/35th, or 54mm). I must have 50 pounds of metal 54mm figures, but they were all acquired when they were \$2.50 a piece. I can't afford to risk my ever so limited skills on the big bucks larger (70mm, 90mm, 100mm 120mm, etc.) figures. For these figures there is a lot more of Method 1, Step 1. Yes, you do paint on the eyebrows, buttons, medals, etc. before the washes. For years they guys have been telling me that I do nice figures, but that my faces...well...suck. So for this project, I've decided to break out the "How to Do Faces" articles by Sheppie, and do the faces in oils. The paints are really inexpensive. I am not now, nor do I think that I will ever be, good enough at this to notice the difference between \$2.50 (on sale) per 1.25 fluid ounce tube, and the \$13 per tube wonder gunk. The much talked-about advantage of oil paints is that they dry slowly. This slow drying time advantage allows the blending of colors that is always more the case with the flesh rather than the cloth or metallic items.

Before we get to far afield, what about these oil paints? What colors does one need? Do I need a second mortgage?

I have started with only six tubes of Winsor & Newton "Winton Oil Colours": Burnt Umber, Burnt Sienna, Raw Sienna, Paynes Grey, Titanium White, and Cadmium Red. Once I had "prepared" all fifteen figures I prepared my pallet. I purchased a pad of stuff that is sort of like wax paper, but not. I suspect that it is waterproof (I don't know, I haven't checked) but it is turpentine proof. I put a piece of this instant pallet in the "bottom"

of a box top about 11x16x2 inches deep. To this I added a 1/8th inch squirt of each of the paints onto the pallet. Is there a secret about 1/8th of an inch of paint? No! It's just that that was about the smallest amount I could get out of the tube at one time. As you'll see, a little goes a long way. The raw and burnt sienna I did not need (you could save a few bucks here). A basic flesh color, for your average Caucasian types, is a little bit of the burnt umber mixed into a bunch of the white. Now a "bunch of the white" is a volume about 2/3rds the size of a piece of birdshot. The amount of the burnt umber required to color the white to a flesh color is maybe 10-15 % of that. To mix things, wet a small paintbrush in turpentine and, picking a nice convenient place on the pallet, smear the desired paints together. Add a little more of one or the other until your smear spot has the color you want.

A very slight amount of the Paynes Grey well-mixed into a corner of the flesh smear will result in a significantly darkened flesh color. The same amount of red goes much further. I had to step down three times to get a lip color that didn't look like the boys were trying out for a Parisian whorehouse. Step down? I took a little of the red, I thought I had very little, but I mixed the red into another corner of the flesh colored smear. The result was a slightly paler red. I moved a bit of the paler red to a different spot on the pallet and, with a clean brush, moved a big chunk of the flesh color to the paler red. The resulting smear was a yet pale-er red. I then moved a bit of this pale-er red to another spot and then added some of the straight burnt umber. The result was pretty dark (a brownish-red color) but it worked.

This is one of the advantages of the slow drying time of oil paints. You can mix your own color, shade or hue. You can add other stuff to the paint to actually speed up or delay drying time. By speeding up the drying time, we're talking reductions on the order of slug to turtle, read that as days to hours. This ability to mix your own shade of color may also be the big terror as relates to oil paints. The stuff rarely comes

in the exact color you want and the terror comes in the form of the question "What do I add to that mess to result in the desired color?" "Do I add white or yellow or what?"

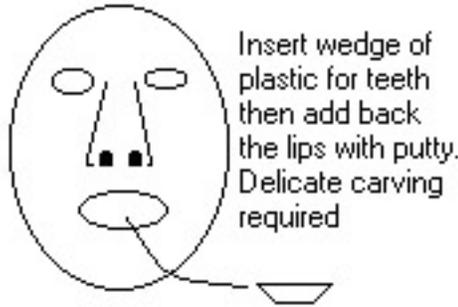
Without getting into a lengthy discussion of color theory suffice it to say that you should check out one of the figure painting books. They usually have a chapter on color, color mixing, and a color wheel. My big point in going here is to demonstrate that if I can do this, anybody can do this. Even the severely color blind can do Method 1, because the label on the paint bottle, jar, or tin identifies the color.

So! What do we do and how do we do it? One of the guys in Tacoma who does a real nice job on faces says "I dun' no... Yuh just do it!". This is, of course, as satisfying as answering the question "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" with "Practice, practice, practice".

OK! So what does one do? Start from the inside out! So, what is inside the face? Brains, sinuses...No, let's not go there. What is inside the face that we might see from the outside? Eyes, teeth, tongue - that's about it.

Since none of my fifteen characters are yelling, screaming or panting, we don't have to worry about mouthparts. Most figures are molded with mouths closed anyway, but to add teeth and tongue you need to make a space for them. There's a lot of art required here, carving and painting and such. Also required is a bit of guts. If you think I'll not trust my alleged talent to do justice to a \$20 figure, how do you think I'd feel about taking a drill to its face? Oh yes, you start by drilling a hole in the face. Make it such that the upper edge of the hole is about the middle of the figure's molded upper lip. Don't make the diameter any wider than the distance between the middle of the eyes. In 1/35th scale, 1/8th of an inch is over four inches. Tried to chomp a 2x4 lately - edgewise? That's only three-and-a-half inches. So a hole in the 1/32nd to 1/16th of an inch range is probably more appropriate. Not to

start a big anatomy lesson here but remember, at least on the people from our part of the galaxy, for the mouth to open the chin moves down.



Insert wedge of plastic for teeth then add back the lips with putty. Delicate carving required

A smile would require a very small hole that would then be elongated side-to-side. Insert a little ridge of plastic for teeth and then with little bits or putty (pick your favorite) rebuild the lips.

A wide-open mouth for a yell or a scream would involve the same elements; just a more rounded hole and you may need to add some tongue with putty before you put in the teeth. Paint wise, it would be pretty dark in there, so use a more dark than red flesh tone and then a wash of black when that phase comes.

OK, so I'm not such a great computer artist, but it is still a thousand words per picture.

Do the standard Sheppie thing for the eyes. The drawing at the bottom of the page will show the basics. If a picture is worth a thousand words, I just saved you/me from babbling on for another

page or two.

For the actual eyeballs, use acrylic hobby paint. Again, we're dealing with drying time. The hobby paint will be dry enough to overpaint with the oil dark flesh in fifteen minutes. Plus, you do not want the eyeball paint to blend.

Remember, you are painting from the inside out. When you paint in the eyelids you use the darker flesh paint (the regular flesh tone with a little bit of the Paynes Grey in it). This covers the eyeball color that you

slop on to color the eye, that also gets on the lids and other surrounding areas. It also covers the stripe you paint through the center of the eye to represent the pupil. When you paint on the lids and put color over the eyeball colors, you add a layer. Suddenly you have an eye looking out of a section of face.

Set the eyeballed figures aside to dry for a couple of days. Remember the long drying time/blending discussion above. You want the eyeball and the lid area to be a bit resistant to the blending process.

OK, so what is this blending business? Remember the discussion about mixing a specific shade or hue by combining two dissimilar colors? The slow drying time is the property that allows that to happen. It also allows the blending process.

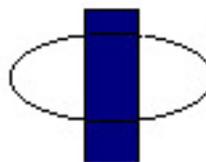
What you do is to paint the face and hands (and whatever flesh areas are exposed) the basic flesh color. Having put the figures in the hot room after the eye areas were painted, the eye areas will dry faster than the pre-mixed flesh color on the pallet. If the paint on the pallet is a little recalcitrant, a little thinner will re-animate it. While you are at the pallet make sure you have the dark flesh color ready to go.

Ready some white and mix a little white and the flesh color to produce a light flesh to complement the dark flesh color.

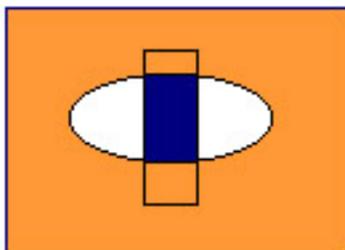
Once the paint is ready, take a look at the figure. Our Tacoma modeler holds the figure upside down in a strong light. In addition to all the ridges (bridge of the nose and eyebrows) if there are any shadows in the upside down face, these get a little dab of the white paint. Places where the light glares in the upside down figure get a touch of the dark flesh. The idea is to change your perspective on the figure to identify areas needing a different shade of the flesh due to the effect of light. The figure will look a bit



Paint the actual eyeball part light grey. White is too stark. A light flesh color is also good.



Paint a stripe of iris color through the center of the eyeball.

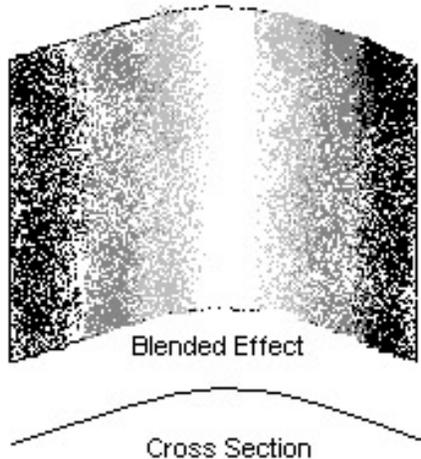


Cut in the upper and lower eye lid with a dark flesh color. That's below the eyebrow and above the cheek bone.

splotchy when you turn it right side up, but this is where the blending comes in.

First, select a soft bristled dry brush. This is a real dry brush. No turpentine, no paint, no nothing - just bristles, and soft ones at that. This will be the blending brush. Some of the real expert figure painters have special brushes that they only use for this blending process. Take a few minutes to find a good one. Take the blending brush and gently stroke across the splotches of varying hues of flesh colored paint. The idea is to move little bits of the colored paint into the adjacent areas. The result is that a bit of the dark flesh paint moves into the area of the "normal" flesh colored paint, darkening it a bit. The white paint moves down from the ridges toward the "normal" flesh colored paint, lightening the area a bit.

Here is an example of blending. The top of the ridge has white paint on it and the valley on each side has the dark paint. Blending the two together produces the blending effect. Even stroking lightly, the highlight areas will be hit harder and thus



spread thinner. I must have put three applications of straight white to the noses of these figures before I got the blending effect I wanted.

Unfortunately, the process is really an art and defies specification. Give it a try and I will resist saying something trite like "Practice, practice, practice". Remember, if you don't like it, just wipe it off and go at it again. That slow drying time has another advantage by allowing you to just start over.

A final note about the blending brush. It will gunk up. After all, you are using it to move paint around. When this happens, and hopefully you will develop enough experience with this process to know when it is about to happen so you can avoid a mess, you have to clean the brush. Turpentine time. Clean it, of course. But now, it is not a dry brush. Set it aside to dry for a couple of days and use another brush. Yes, you may well need more than one blending brush.

To Be Continued...

PrezNotes

from page 1

Hmmm, maybe I won't encourage her that much...

We'll see you at the next meeting,

Terry

Meeting Reminder

November 12
10 AM - 1 PM

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

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

