

Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
October 2009

PREZNOTES



Well, that was a delightfully long summer. Not. Too hot for too long, for one thing. I certainly didn't get anything done at all, except for an hour or so at the bench one evening in September. As it is, I've only finished four models so far this year and the three or five sitting on the bench have been sitting there since May, gathering dust. But now that the weather is changing as I write this, something more akin to what we Northwesterners are familiar with: rain. I'm rapidly becoming familiar with my bench again...

Three weeks ago we packed up the Tacoma and headed out for a week of long overdue R&R. We drove on south to McMinnville for the Annual OHMS show at the Evergreen Air Museum. This was our first trip there in about four or five years and as usual they put on terrific show. There were about 420 or so models entered in the contest, and for the most part all categories were well represented. The quality of models was outstanding as usual, hardly a clinker to be found in the bunch. The small cadre of judges was very efficient, moving from one category to the next in a very timely manner. Turnout from all the Northwest chapters was very strong with approximately 100 or so entering models in the contest.

After the show Saturday, we hit the road and ended up in Tillamook, Oregon on Saturday evening. Sunday morning we headed out to the Air Museum. This was my first visit to Tillamook and I was not disappointed. The collection consists of a wide variety of FLYING aircraft, everything from a Bellanca AirCruiser to a PBY Catalina. A few of the aircraft that caught my eye and extra attention with my camera (in addition to the Bellanca) were a Martin AM-1 Mauler, an AD-4 Skyraider, the PBY, and a Grumman J2F-6 Duck. There was also a Hispano Buchon that appeared in the movie *Battle of Britain* and one of the few unflyable aircraft there, plus a PV-2 Harpoon, which had just flown in. I was

hoping to see the Dauntless but it wasn't there that day. Of course another big draw for me was the hangar itself. It was positively overwhelming.

We returned home after a few days on the coast and discovered upon our return that there was an airshow at Paine Field over the weekend. We hadn't heard about it so we went out Sunday morning to see what there was to see. The show was held at the Future of Flight facility on the northwest corner of Paine Field and where a new air museum is being built next door, the Sessions Air Museum. On display when we were there a wide variety of vintage aircraft and warbirds. I only had a limited amount of chip space left on my camera so I concentrated on the warbirds. Two Mustangs, (a B and a D), a Skyraider (second one in a week), an F7F, a handful of T-6s, a beautiful Howard DGA, Stearmans, DH Tiger Moth and Chipmunk, and several others were in attendance all of which flew during the day. There was also a tired old PBY-6 firebomber in attendance which also flew during the show and actually made a water drop. That was spectacular, and considering how long it took to get the engines started (and sounded) surprised me that it actually flew at all.

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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 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 \$25 a year for regular mail delivery of the newsletter, and \$15 for e-mail delivery, and may be paid to Spencer Tom, 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 2009 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.

October 10
December 12

November 21 (Third Saturday)

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION			
IPMS No.:	Name: _____		
(leave blank)	FIRST M LAST		
Address: _____			
City: _____		State: _____	Zip: _____
Signature (required by PO): _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult: \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> Junior (17 years old or younger): \$12			
<input type="checkbox"/> Family (Adult dues + \$5, one set magazines, 4 of membership cards required: _____)			
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Check out our web page: www.ipmsusa.org			

The Grumman Gander

by Craig Burke

In the years just before World War II Grumman ambitiously sought to displace Douglas as the major US Navy contractor for carrier aircraft. The US Navy was delighted with the biplane Grumman F3F fighter and its monoplane follow-on, the F4F Wildcat, but Douglas dominated the attack aircraft with the SBD Dauntless dive-bomber and TBD Devastator torpedo-bomber. Grumman was making inroads, however, with the superior TBF Avenger design that the Navy was considering to replace the Devastator. Dauntless replacements were proposed by Curtiss and Grumman as the SB2C Helldiver and the yet-un-named SBF, respectively, while Douglas was trying to make a quantum leap to a combined dive-and-torpedo bomber (to become the Decimator/Skyraider). Douglas had nothing that would be ready anytime soon.

Grumman had charmed the Navy with its Loening-inspired, biplane pedestal-float J2F Duck, and the Navy and Grumman were already looking for a monoplane successor with increased capability. Grumman designers had formulated a basic two-place attack aircraft that could either be outfitted with pedestal and floats similar to the Duck, or a “normal” fuselage and landing gear that was the SBF. Both featured fold-back wings and arresting gear.

Curtiss, though, was the first to have its prototype Scout Bomber finished and tested to a grudging US Navy satisfaction, and the Navy awarded a production contract to them almost immediately. The Navy saw value in the Grumman amphibian, but only had lukewarm interest in the SBF and would only “consider” permitting a limited number of SBFs for export to friendly countries. Somewhat disheartened by lack of foreign orders for its SBF, Grumman abandoned work on the wheeled version, and concentrated on the floatplane version.



The Grumman amphibian became known as “Piffy”, for its designation as Patrol Fighter, Grumman, Export, or PFF (E). Originally it had a smaller and more economical engine as part of USN specification for a successor to the popular J2F Duck amphibian. Grumman, in a private venture, thought that a larger engine would be in the offing for either foreign or US demands, so designed the aircraft for the largest engine available, then used the specified smaller engine in the meantime. Engines could range from the Pratt and Whitney Twin Wasp of 900 hp to the Double Wasp of 2,000 hp (2,200 in the subsequent Helldiver). Armament options ranged from light (one .30 in each wing, one defensive .30, and no wing hard points) to “heavy” (four wing .50s, twin rear defense .30 cal guns, and attachments for two 100-lb bombs or auxiliary fuel tanks.) “Dash” numbers signified the engine/armament option. A remarkable new feature was floats that folded outward to the wingtips for additional streamlining. An additional attractive feature that could be “custom-ordered” was that the wings could fold back along the fuselage (like the Wildcat) so that the now-named Grumman

“Gander” could fit in boathouses or stored in pairs in small hangars.

The United States sought to allow independence to the Philippines in 1941, but wanted the new country to have a strong self-defence force. Several old British and American warships (mainly pre-dreadnoughts) were slated for transfer to the Philippine Navy, including the sister-ship to the US aircraft carrier *Langley*. Like *Langley*, the *PS Manila* was partially deconstructed to become a seaplane carrier. Part of the FFABDA (French, Filipino, Australian, British, Dutch, American) coalition’s deterrent to Japanese aggression, the Philippine Navy wanted a floatplane/amphibian that could serve as a scout, light attack, or fighter. They wanted something like the present USN J2F Duck, but modernized with monoplane configuration and increased power and armament. They also wanted something that could out-perform the current Zero floatplane fighter, known to be in Japanese use in China and the most likely antagonist should war break out. Grumman took on the task with US Navy blessing, marketing the aircraft to world nations, and presum-

ing the US Navy would want something similar.

Many “colonial” powers, including the Netherlands, France, Great Britain, and Portugal, bought the Gander’s low-powered and lightly armed version for utility duties in the Far East. To spur sales, Grumman offered four of their high-performance Ganders if eight of their medium-performance Ganders were purchased. France wanted to re-equip the seaplane tender *Commandante Teste* with capable aircraft, and took Grumman up on their offer. The high-performance Ganders would be the “fighters” that could escort the medium-performance “attack” aircraft. Ganders were on hand in French Indochina, Indonesia, Malaya and Timor. Ganders even showed up in South America and Africa wherever extensive waterways existed.

The medium-performance Zero floatplane fighter (later called “Rufe”) was well known at this time, equipping numerous Japanese seaplane carriers and some Thai land-based units as well. What was NOT known was that though Japan was parading its seaplane carriers around for

the world public to see, they were deliberately keeping the floatless Zero carrier fighter (MUCH higher-performing) to a low profile. Japan was also secretly working on their high-performance Kyofu floatplane fighter to supplant the Zero floatplane.

Eruption of the mini-war between Thailand and France in 1940/41 saw the Grumman Gander go up against the Zero floatplane in numerous small skirmishes. The French seaplane tender *Commandante Teste* was the centerpiece of French success at sea. The low-performance Ganders seemed to be equals, but the high-performance Ganders dominated easily with a favorable kill ratio. Japan came to Thailand’s “rescue” with naval support and only through overwhelming numbers did the French Ganders get bested. Seeing such a clash of seaplanes would have had Hector Bywater’s nodding approval. Japan took notice and rushed the Kyofu successor into production. Grumman got flooded with orders for the Gander from East Asian countries and colonies in a “floatplane arms race” as they began to modernize and upgrade.

The Philippines and France were the only Allied countries in the area with “real” seaplane carriers (*Manila* and *Commandante Teste* respectively), so opted for the up-rated engines, armament, and wing-folding. Even the US Navy was impressed and opted for several to distribute one each to its carriers. The plane was popular with the Navy. Powerful and agile for such a large plane, the Gander was only slightly slower than the Wildcat, and not a few airmen wondered what the plane could do without the cumbersome pedestal, floats, and second crewmember. Grumman also wondered, and had a few experimental single-seat prototypes built. The high performance surprised even Grumman.

Then came the war.

The *PNS Manila* bore the brunt of Philippine aerial resistance to the initial Japanese attacks. The IJN seaplane carriers *Chitose* and *Chiyoda*, equipped with “Rufes” and a few experimental Kyofus, took on the *Manila* and clearly dominated, but the Ganders accounted for nearly half of the attacking force before being overwhelmed. There were two instances of Ganders fighting Kyofus, each with a victory over the other. Land-based bombers sunk the *Manila*, and the surviving Ganders made their way to land.

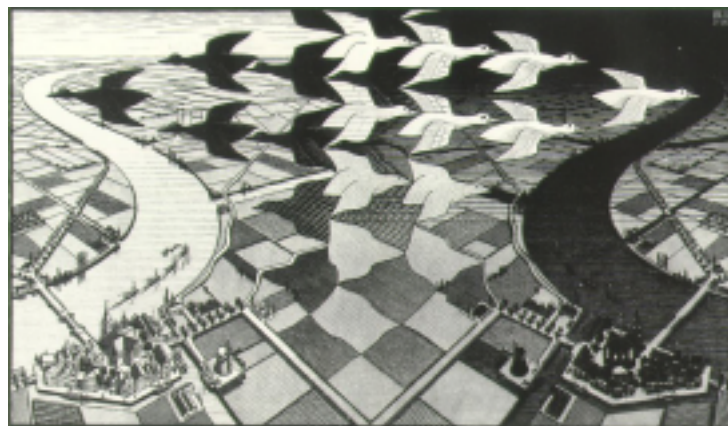
Postscript: The F4F Wildcat was the mainstay of our carrier fighter forces at the outset of war, but was generally out-classed by the Japanese Zero. This was an ugly surprise, and the US Navy was scrambling for a successor. The Grumman successor to the Wildcat, the XF8F Bearcat, was in the late design stages and ordered “off the drawing boards”, but the US Navy knew it might be a year and a half from entering squadron service. The Navy needed something NOW if at all possible. In an emergency meeting between the Navy procurement branch and aircraft manufacturers some Grumman designers suggested that their experimental Gander/SBF single-seat prototypes could be quickly converted to a hefty single-seat fighter and production could begin almost



immediately using the current Gander tooling and jigs. Though somewhat doubtful, the Navy gave approval to produce a couple of dozen fighter variants for evaluation. This conversion we have come to know as the successful F6F Hellcat.

My model depicts the Grumman Gander “Dash-5” of *PS Manila*’s Air Group Commander, Lt. Jesus Tagalog. The red fuselage stripes indicate command, and the white wing bars on either side of the Philippine national insignia diamond are “allied recognition stripes” adopted when the Manila was sent into French Indochinese waters during the Franco-Thai war (Vichy French aircraft had horizontal white bars on either side of the French roundel to help distinguish them from the somewhat similar Thai roundel.) Tagalog, an avian specialist and breeder, had the largest private aviary in the Philippines. He not only deliberately made the insignia bars into stylized wings, but invented and applied the “birds and worms” camouflage scheme to his and his squadron’s aircraft, adding dark blue-gray patches to the formerly monochromatic light navy gray paint scheme. The model depicts the day after his arrival in Cavite from the first air battle and loss of his carrier. It shows his two victories (a “Rex” and a “Rufe”) and his gunner’s. The following day his aircraft was destroyed by Japanese strafers.

The 1/72nd scale model was made mainly from Hasegawa’s Grumman Hellcat and Airfix’s Grumman J2F Duck. The “skinny” Duck pedestal had to be widened with two .080 slabs of sheet plastic to match up with the Hellcat’s fuselage. New pedestal windows and a “throat” fairing (to help clear the float from the Hellcat’s large propeller) were added. The Hellcat’s fuselage was cut to add a second crewmember and machine gun, and of course lots of putty was used to blend in the shapes. The “retractable” floats came from another Grumman product—the Albatross amphibian. The camouflage job was inspired by M.C. Escher’s painting *Day and Night* with contrasting bird shapes.



DML/Dragon 1/35th Scale M4 Sherman “Composite Hull” PTO

by Andrew Birkbeck

Normally with my reviews of model kits, I steer well clear of technical and historical notes. I do this firstly, because I am not an “expert”, and so don’t have much to offer that can’t be better explained by someone more knowledgeable than I. Secondly, I am not a “rivet counter”, and so usually don’t care if a model has one or two small inaccuracies here and there. I love to build models, and so am usually after a fairly accurate kit, but more importantly I desire a well detailed model of a subject that strikes my fancy. I make a rare exception here, as I feel what I have to say from a historical and technical perspective has an important bearing on this particular kit. So hang with me while I give you my potted history of the M4 Composite Hull Sherman.



The M4 Composite Hulled Shermans were built solely by the Chrysler Corporation’s Detroit Tank Arsenal, with only about 800 or so being completed. At the time of their construction, the Sherman series of tanks was undergoing a period of great and rapid change, thanks to a flood of requests for changes due to ongoing Stateside testing by the military, and requests for changes coming in from the field of battle. This said, the majority of the Composite Hulled Shermans had the later VVSS suspension with the upswept trailing arms, and most had the large driver/co-driver hatches.

Turning to the turrets, the Composite Hulled Shermans appear from photographic evidence to have had only two types of turrets: the mid-production low bustle turrets with the commander’s gun ring hatch assembly and without a loader’s hatch, and also missing the so called pistol port. This type of turret also appears to have always had the cast-in cheek armor on the right side of the turret. The other type of turret fitted was the early high bustle turret, with the commander’s gun ring hatch, an oval loader’s hatch, and a pistol port.

So much for the history, but it is very important, as you will shortly see. Now onto the kit itself: this consists of 12 sprues worth of parts, and of various lineages, together with a photo etched fret, DS100 glue-able single piece tracks, and a first rate sheet of decals covering markings for four tanks, printed by Cartograph of Italy. DML/Dragon’s Sherman series originally started with parts from Italeri’s now ancient M4A1 (76) kit (still a nice kit), upgraded where appropriate, and these have been added to over the years with original tool DML/Dragon parts. As the

DML/Dragon parts became more and more prominent, the Italeri parts slipped into the background, but continue to be provided in the kits as “parts not for use”. Such is this kit, with perhaps half the parts contained in the kit thus listed as “not for use”. Sprue R, which contains among other things the main upper hull part, is a brand new tooling.

Construction is fairly straight forward, commencing in Section 1 with assembly of the bogies and road wheels. DML/Dragon gives the modeler two choices of wheels, the spoked and pressed type, with the latter being two parts each. The kit gives you three different options for drive sprockets, and two choices for idler wheel type. The bogies themselves are the correct raised arm variety, though a separate set of earlier style bogies are included in the “spare parts”. Everything progresses smoothly through this section.

Sections 2 through 4 involve assembly of the lower and upper hull. The “composite” main upper hull part (front of the hull was cast, this being welded to a rear section consisting of welded plates) is a brand



new tooling, and has excellent detail. I chose to use the injection molded front mudguard parts, R12, rather than the photo etched parts, MA16, because I had a bear of a time with the PE mudguards on the last DML Dragon kit I built. However, the injection parts do come with PE detail parts, which I did use.

The light guards, front and rear, together with the siren guard come in either injection plastic or PE, and I chose to use the injection parts again. Sadly, these parts appear to be from the original Italeri molds, and really are in need of replacing with some state of the art injection parts, as the ones supplied are over-scale in thickness. I took my Dremel tool and thinned them down somewhat. I also drilled out the clear plastic headlights, and installed MV lenses. As for the tools, DML/Dragon gives you injection plastic tools together with PE parts for the tie downs. I wasn't happy with them, so instead opted to try out some of Formation's lovely resin tools, with cast on straps. Not that the kit PE wouldn't work, I just happened to have the resin ones handy, and wanted to try them out.

We then move on to Section 5, and it is here, dear members, that we run into a tricky situation, for this is the construction



sequence for the turret. And as I mentioned earlier, in my historical introduction, the Composite Hulled Sherman's had only two known types of turrets, the mid production low bustle, which was minus a pistol port, and with cast-in cheek armor, or the early high bustle turret. And clearly on the outside of the box, the kit promises two types of turrets. One is a late low bustle, with pistol port and oval loaders hatch, which is useless if historical accuracy is your modeling goal. The other turret

option is an early high bustle, and would be fine for use, except that whoever set up the mold machine for DML/Dragon did so incorrectly, and blocked off the lower turret ring section of the mold. You therefore get all the parts for an early high bustle turret, minus the lower turret ring part. And no, the turret ring from the low bustle turret won't fit.

However, thanks to DragonCare, DML/Dragon's customer care service, I quickly managed to get hold of the correct high bustle turret ring, so I was able to build a correct version of the Composite Hull after all! And very nice the turret parts are, with subtle cast texture in the appropriate areas, along with crisply rendered casting numbers/symbols. There is one area to look out for, and that is in Section 6, where the instructions show the assembled gun and mantlet being installed into the turret. The instructions neglect to show that part B34 needs to be installed in the turret gun mantlet opening. Other than this small error, everything went swimmingly with the turret build.

The last stage of construction involves the installation of the towing cable and its attachment points, together with the sand shield attachment strips, all made up of photo etched parts. I managed to get the



bases for the tow cable clamps in place fine, but catapulted the tops of the clamps across the room from my tweezers, so had to replace them with Formation parts! The sand shield mounting strips have small tabs protruding from one edge, but I could find no photographic evidence of their existence in my reference books, so filed them off, and the strips went on without any issues.

The tracks are formed from DML/Dragon's glueable DS100 rubber/plastic, and are the best in the business for such one-piece tracks: very well detailed, and easy to paint and mount onto the model.

Lastly we have the decals/markings, and due to the turret issue previously mentioned, "Houston, we have a problem": almost certainly three of the four marking options provided, and most certainly "Southern Cross" of the 44th Tank Battalion, all were low bustle turreted tanks without the pistol port. This therefore left only one option open to me with the parts I had: "Bushmaster" of the 763rd Tank Battalion, of which an excellent reference photograph exists on page 33, top, of that old (but still great) standby, Bruce Culver's *Sherman in Action*. The beauty of this photo is that it shows the modeler exactly which characteristics the turret has, and it is clearly an early high bustle!

So where do we stand with this kit? Well, there is a major technical error regarding the turret parts contained in the kit as received for review. However, thanks to DragonCare, I was able to obtain the missing high bustle turret ring, and accurately complete the model. One presumes that DML/Dragon, being aware of this error, will change their mold set up and include the appropriate turret ring in future pressings of the kit. They do however need to sort out the lower bustle turret issue. Either they need to change the markings on offer, providing correct markings for all high bustle examples, or they need to retool things so as to provide the correct, pistol-port-less example of the low bustle turret.

I do recommend this kit to all IPMS members, as it is extremely well detailed, and being the only injection molded Composite Hulled Sherman on the market in 1/35th scale, is an important variant to add to your collection. Just make sure you watch out for the turret issue. My sincere thanks to Dragon Models USA for providing this kit to IPMS USA for review, and for allowing me such a fun build, and to exercise my little gray cells doing some fun research.

Special thanks to Bruce Culver, for helping me sort out the intricacies of Composite Hulled Shermans, together with all those helpful souls over at the Allied Discussion Forum on http://www.ipmsusa2.org/reviews2/mil-veh/kits/dragon_35_sherman-ch-pto/www.missing-lynx.com

Holes

by John DeRosia

Plastic holes, how to make them and what they could be used for.

This is something fun I do to help create that 'gizmo' sci-fi look (See Fig 1.) on some of my models. Of course - this can be applied to any type of project that has a need for 'plastic holes'. Okay - lets get technical for 39 seconds - I am using the term 'holes', but in reality they are the 'discs' created by punching holes.

What is needed: A plain old ordinary every day type of paper hole punch. (See Fig 2.) You know - the kind they let us use in class to punch holes in paper. As far as I know- they are still not considered lethal weapons in schools. This is the single punch kind you can get almost anywhere that sells school supplies. Go figure - I got mine at a local \$1 Dollar Store for \$1.69. My luck...

The next thing I use are your basic plastic 'For Sale' or 'Beware of Dog' or 'Most Things in a Dollar Store are not \$1' signs. (See Fig 3.) You can get these just about anywhere. They typically have the bright fluorescent red/orange letters on a black background. They are about the size of a piece of notebook paper give or take. The cost is around the \$2-3 range for each.

These signs are great sources of plastic no matter what model project you are working on. The thickness varies depending on the manufacturer - but so far I've been able to punch through them with no problem. I usually punch out about 10-20 at once and then empty them onto my work bench.

I see these holes ('discs') as being on a real vehicle (or structure) as hatches, access holes and so on. To me, all sci-fi vehicles need massive amounts of access holes. If you are modeling ships, you could use these for door hatches. And the list goes on.

By the way, if you have other means to punch different sizes - great. Me, I pretty much stick with the one size hole for all my applications. I know there are manufacturers that make different size punches but they are more expensive.

The following pictures will show you three examples of how I use holes (See Fig 4.)

'Holey Mackerel'...just have fun!



Fig 1. Sci-Fi model in work with 'holes'.



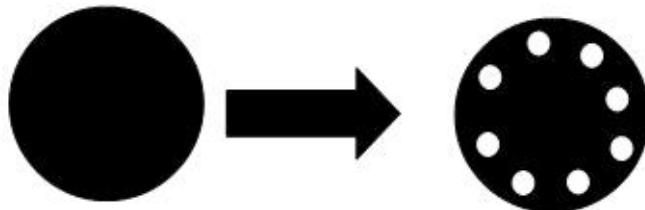
Fig 2. A simple hole punch.



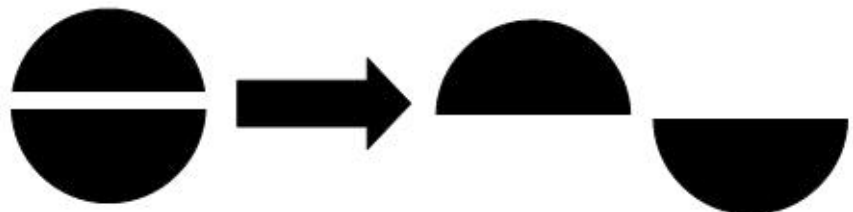
Fig 3. Plastic Signs



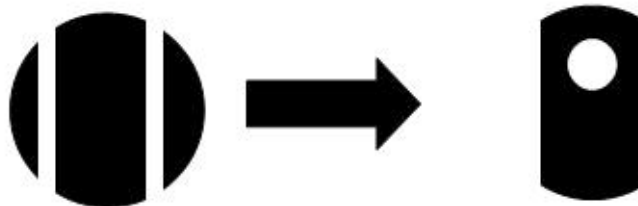
1. First punch out a lot of 'holes'.



2. Paint dots to represent an access hatch.



3. Cut in half, use as reinforcing doublers.



4. Cut 2 ends, use as entry hatch

Fig 4. What to use the holes ('disc') for.

Tamiya 1/48th Focke-Wulf Fw 190D-9

by Hal Marshman Sr

I am aware this kit has been around for several years, but this is the first time I've completed one, so I thought folks might like to know my opinion of the kit. I've included some pics, so you might judge for yourself. The kit is typically Tamiya, in that the moldings are nice and crisp, dimple and press marks free. Cast in light gray plastic, Tamiya provides you with engraved panel detail, sufficiently deep for your enhancement techniques to take effect. The clear parts are crystal clear, devoid of blemishes, and thin enough to look right, but not so much as to be fragile. A drop tank is provided as the only ordnance. Two sets of cooling gills are providing, so that you can display them either open or closed.

The decal sheet is adequate, and provides markings for two different planes. I might mention that this kit was developed from their earlier Fw 190F-8, and as such includes a few extraneous parts, such as a radial engine front. Tamiya's kit isn't perfect, as it provides a fully walled gear well, but the original well was opened at the inner front, exposing some of the engine bottom to view from the outside. It has been said that the gear legs are not sufficiently long enough and I agree, they just do not look right. Might be another 1/16th inch could make the difference. All this having been said, the kit goes together exceptionally well, with no filling required. For my build, I added scratch built seat belts and buckles, brake lines, visual gear indicators, and the dorsal antenna beneath the rear fuselage. My cannons are vinyl covered paper clips, while the navigation lights are MV model train lenses. Note the slack antenna cable; blown hood Fw 190 variants had no tensioning devices, so the antenna cable would sag when the canopy was opened.

All paints are Model Master Enamels, RLM numbers 63, 76, 75, 82 (bottled as 83), and 81, plus non-buffable aluminum. I



added a smidgeon of red to the 81 to add to the violet tint, and a touch of 82 to the 76 for the "84" (not a proven RLM color, but used in sufficient amounts that modelers have given it a spurious RLM number, I suppose for identification purposes). I found a piece of artwork on the net of this scheme, and found it so attractive I had to reproduce it. The airplane is purported to be that of Lt. Theo Nibel of JG 54, during Operation Bodenplatte, January 1, 1945. Nibel's Focke was brought down while strafing at low level, by a partridge strike in the radiator. I did the fuselage and fin with the "84", the rudder in 76 mottled with 75. Upper wing surfaces are 63 with disruptive bands of 75. The fuselage upper decking is 82 and 81, with mottling of both on fuselage sides and fin. What about the bottom? I must admit that here I am extemporizing, not actually knowing what the real undersides looked like. What I've done is applied an "educated guess", knowing that many langnasen in the last few months of the war were done just so. Leading edges 75, main panel unpainted aluminum, wing caps, gear covers, and control surfaces in 76.



You may ask, "Why would an airplane be such a mishmash of uncoordinated colors?" Simply put, by late 1944, Allied bombing had forced the building halls underground, into tunnels, and such. All supplies, including paints, were in very short supply, and the ground transportation system was hectic at best. Many sub assemblies were being made in barns and garages by unskilled labor, who might not have access to the latest paints, and were working with crude equipment. The wonder is, how under such dire circumstances, were the Germans able to produce so many machines?

Paint Revelations

by Scott Kruize



To discuss one of the most significant technological achievements of the late 20th-century, we need to go back and consider the epochal event of late May, 1962. That's when I had my 11th birthday party, and was given a model airplane kit: the Monogram B-58 Hustler "with Weapons Pod Release Action!"

I was not, on that day, entirely unfamiliar with model kits. On a handful of previous birthdays and Christmases, some well-meaning relative or another had given me one. On the first free evening that followed, Father would glue it together while I sat and watched, and then possibly helped dip the decals in water. What more was there?

But after this birthday party, I made a formal resolution. I would assemble this kit all by myself. Furthermore, I would do a GOOD job, including painting it!

Fortunately, I did not have to gather up my slender financial resources and go shopping for paint. My mother owned a small assortment of Testors' enamels. Not quite sure why: she wasn't into tole painting or anything like that. She painted in oils, on canvas, in the classic artist's fashion. I think she used the little enamel bottles from time to time to touch up some household item, or even one of our kids' toys, that had a paint chip or scratch.

Whatever her original purpose for them was, I became their de facto owner and user. It's likely they were bought as a set, because they were 'complete': black, white, silver, gold, and the most common colors: red, blue, orange, yellow, brown, and green. I needed no others to start my modeling career.

In fact, the Monogram kit had a great decal set, with the Convair logo all done in black and white. All I needed to paint was the red nose and tail, the black anti-glare panel and tires, plus a bit of brown on the three crew members' G-suits.

I was quite happy and proud about how the kit came out. (But it's been lost and gone forever; the picture here is of a rebuild, a 'NABBROKE': a 'Nostalgic Aging Baby Boomer Real Old Kit Experience'.) Subsequent kit builds got pretty much the same kind of treatment. I would paint a little trim here and there, put a little black and silver on landing gear and other equipment, do the pilot's suit in brown, and somewhere along the way I acquired a bottle of 'flesh color' for the pilot's face. For a very long time, though, I would leave kits in the overall color they were molded in. It didn't even begin to occur to me that they ought to be painted entirely.

Until the day, as I've described previously, that I routinely visited the Thunderbird Drug Store, and found there a dozen kits in the AirFix/72 series of World War II

warplanes. These were molded in plain silver gray, and obviously needed full painting if they were to be shown in the keen pugnacious camouflage schemes of the fightin'-and-shootin' box art.

I do wonder if the Fates include a sister who specifically watches over the lives of modelers, intervening at just the right times. You see, hard on the heels of my 'discovery' of the Airfix/72 line was a significant addition to the paints in the model kit and toy section at Thunderbird. There had always been a rack of additional Testors' enamels, and I recall buying light blue, dark green, and an additional shade of brown. But they weren't quite right; weren't sinister or 'martial' enough.

Then one day, there was a whole paint set: Testors' Military Flats. Olive drab, flat white, light gray, matt Navy blue, and a couple of shades of green and brown for camouflage schemes. (I'm working from memory here, but I see the set is still in production; a bit more expensive now, but still quite reasonable when you consider inflation over 50 years!) Anyway, it enabled me to start approaching the Airfix box art!

Interlude: the Dark Ages. Or at least, my own. The last kit I put those military flats on was the AMT 1/72nd scale Junkers Ju 88 bomber. That was assembled at the dorm at the University of Washington, before my homework and other activities



there consumed all my time. Thereafter came graduation, first job, marriage, moving, divorce...we won't go into what all happened during the long interlude between that Ju 88 Then, and 'Now' times. It's probably a stereotypical rehash, much like what many of you readers can recall of your own lives.

But one odd thing: I never lost my willingness to step into a hobby shop and look at the toys there. One day, years after I'd left the UW as a student, I was back in the U-District, walking home from my short, disastrous job at Safeco. I took a slightly different way home to my apartment, realized University Hobbies was still open, and went in to browse a bit. There on a counter near the front of the store was a box: "Sale! Polly-S Colors water-base acrylic paints. Half Off Selected Colors!"

Water-based hobby paints? That sounded useful. Back at the U, Ken Murphy had explained to me that some artists were now painting in acrylics, which could be used much like oil paints, but dried quicker and didn't stink up the art studio and environs. Now, apparently modelers didn't have to stink up their work tables with enamel and laquer fumes...how convenient! How technology marches on! I decided right then and there to buy some of these acrylics, and try them, sometime...

WIG-wam! —The WIG-wam stores!
You gotta buy MORE at the WIG-wam stores!
WIG-wam!

OK, that little ditty has been dancing around my head since I first started thinking about writing this essay about model paints in my life. Now that I've inflicted it on all you readers, I feel better. (See Mark Twain's "Punch, Brothers, Punch!" for a more thorough treatment of this phenomenon.)

The Wigwam stores are long gone, but during their existence in the mid-60s, this cut-rate bargain-basement department store "chain" (?) could just barely afford to



do five-second commercials on late-night local television. The commercials consisted of a couple of still shots of their shelves, crowded with their eclectic selection of cheap merchandise, then one of a storefront, just during the playing of their little ditty.

Wigwam is significant to my personal story for two reasons. First, it became, along with A&H Drugs right next door, the substitute in Kent for the Thunderbird drug store in Lakewood. When we moved, I found modest model kit displays in these two stores, and they were close enough for frequent visits, even before I could drive. The two stores were next to the East Hill Safeway, where Mother did most of her grocery shopping and where I would get my first 'real' job as a boxboy, after having a paper route.

Wigwam's prices were discounted a few pennies more than at A&H Drugs, so I'd look for kits there first!

The second point of significance was that Wigwam is where my father bought a lot of paint.

When recalling the smells from my youth, a few were nice. Freshly cut Christmas trees, my paternal grandmother's spice cookies, and Play-Doh. I still play with Play-Doh, although now I don't attempt to sculpt anything from it. I use it to mask

irregular mottle-type camouflage schemes for airbrushing my modern airplane kit builds.

Some smells were not so nice. For example, father eventually got rid of the old reel-type push mower, and bought a Sears power lawn mower with a two-stroke cycle engine. In these environmentally-correct days, you'd never go near such a machine. It belched clouds of oily, stinky smoke everywhere that would drift out of the yard, around the neighbors' property, finally rising into the atmosphere to poison us all.

But the worst of my childhood smell memories is of cheap enamel house paint. Even back in our house in Lakewood, Father frequently had minor remodeling projects going. Then when I was 13, we moved to Kent so he could save commuting time to his new job at Boeing. Property was cheap at the time on Kent's east hill, which had only started to be developed into suburban tracts, and he was able to recognize his architect's dream of designing and building his own house. It was done at absolutely minimum cost, though, and when we moved in, nearly all the interior finishing work had to be done. My memories of those early years is inextricably bound up with the near-constant smell of cheap enamel house paint, most purchased at Wigwam.

Then one day, he brought home a new kind of paint. It had a smell downright sweet in comparison. It was latex.

I regard the advent of latex paint as a major technological triumph to make my life easier and better. Since I've become a homeowner myself, inevitably involved in remodeling, I frequently have its scent fill my house. I sometimes come home to find my wife had a redecorating 'attack', and some room is now a different color. But the smell doesn't bother me, and it doesn't last long. It couldn't be more different from the old enamels!

Recall that earlier I talked about the enamel paints I myself bought and used in my early modeling career: little dime bottles of Pactra and Testors' enamels. Their smell was one of those negative things that we modelers back then just had to put up with.

There was a long interval till the Now. For a time, I built sport-type, non-scale radio control balsa models. The major overall finish on these was iron-on plastic film, but there was always a need for a little bit of paint here and there, and for that I used classic model airplane dope, or more modern Hobbypoxy enamels. Both of these paints were overpoweringly, unpleasantly aromatic.

But awhile back, as I've described, I came home with a bunch of Polly-S paints from a sale at University Hobby. These sat for quite a long time, until one day, a little over 10 years ago, I emerged from the Dark Ages. I realized finally that I simply had to return to building scale plastic display models. Having recently discovered eBay, I went browsing into the appropriate section and there, for reasons totally obscure to me at the time, found an AMT Hawker Tempest V going begging, with no bids. I put in a modest one of less than \$3, and much to my surprise, won. Back then, I'd built Revell's version in 1/72nd scale. Now I thought I'd try it in 1/48th, using this shiny new kit, and painting it with my newly-discovered water-based acrylic enamels.

None of you readers need leap in here with e-mailed explanations of why the AMT Tempest kit went for so little money; it's perfectly clear now. But I had fun building it, and was quite pleased with how the paints worked. They covered well, had a scent even less intrusive than latex house paint, and like latex, cleaned up readily with just a little soap and water.

I should comment here that I never did like cleaning brushes in solvents like lacquer thinner, but always did so while working with my R/C models, and made my brushes

serve for years and years. My father served as my 'negative example' in this endeavor. Strong in many other ways, he seemed to lack the moral will to even try to clean his enamel-laden brushes. The approach he finally took was to wipe off as much of the enamel paint as he could, dip the brush in turpentine, then wrap it in aluminum foil and set it aside. If something else needed painting within a week, the brush would be more or less usable. Any longer than that, the brush would harden into a completely unusable rock and would have to be replaced. When he started using latex paints, cleanup was very much easier, but I can't say he ever really did a good job, even then!

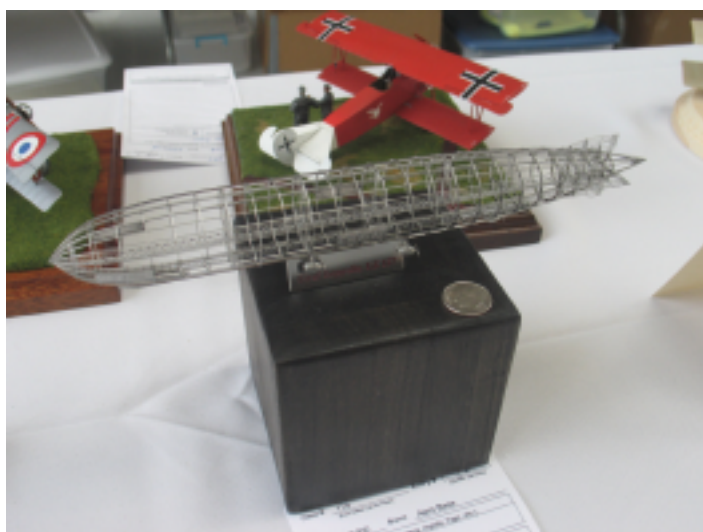
Back to my return from the Dark Ages. I took my freshly completed Tempest to a meeting at the Museum of Flight of the NorthWest Scale Modelers, having been steered there by Emil of Skyway Hobbies. (I 'discovered' his shop shortly after I began to browse eBay for plastic kits. His place is better!)

I half expected the NWSMs to be such skilled and sophisticated modelers that they would laugh when this first effort in decades went on the table. Well, they ARE skilled and sophisticated modelers, but they didn't laugh. (At least, not in front of me. I can't comment what transpired when several of them met afterwards at nearby Randy's Restaurant; their hangout because of its proximity to the MOF, and its large collection of model airplanes hanging from the ceiling.)

So I'm still with them, and still putting my efforts on the table. I like to think they're getting better, over time. I've joined the IPMS Seattle Chapter, too, of course. Many of our members remain masters of lacquers and enamels, to this day. But I don't feel my use of water-based acrylics is any kind of limitation: models so finished, by modelers much better than me, take their share of prizes at the yearly contests.



Continued on page 16



OHMS Show and More

photos and captions by Terry Moore

This page, clockwise from top left: Some exquisite wood ship models; Excellent sub model; PBV-6 at Paine Field; Bellanca AirCruiser at Tillamook; Photoetch Zeppelin kit. It's REALLY small!





*Above: Any model venue with a real B-17
in it is a winner*

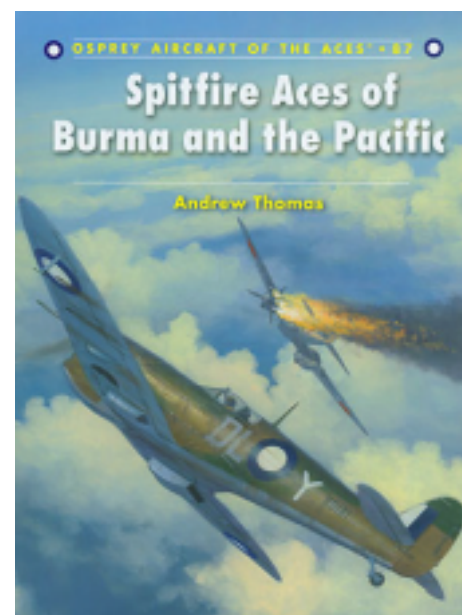
Below: Overall view of the show



Aircraft of the Aces 87: Spitfire Aces of Burma and the Pacific, by Andrew Thomas

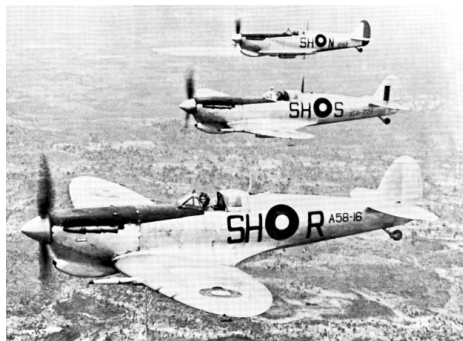
reviewed by Chris Banyai-Riepl

While the combat operations of the Supermarine Spitfire in Europe are fairly well known, the actions in the Far East are another story. This latest title in the Osprey Aircraft of the Aces series tackles this lesser-known theater of Spitfire operations, covering both the Mk Vc and Mk VIII. The book begins with the first Spitfire Mk Vc aircraft returning to the Far East from Britain in 1942. By 1943, Spitfires were defending the skies over Darwin and flying over Burma.



The varied locations resulted in a concurrent usage of Spitfires in very different environs, so the book cannot take a strictly chronological approach. Rather, the book is divided according to areas of operation, beginning with Darwin and moving on to Burma, the East Indies, and finally into Borneo. By breaking the subject up like this, it is easier to follow all of the Spitfire operations in the Far East, making for a much more enjoyable read.

Complementing the text are many excellent photos of Far East Spitfires. These aircraft had some of the most interesting color schemes and markings for the Spitfire, and these photos highlight many of these. The center profile section documents thirty-six of these aircraft in color, from brown and green Mk Vc Spitfires through to the later gray and green and even silver ones from the latter years of the war.



This is another good addition to the Aircraft of the Aces series, and should be quite popular with those Spitfire aficionados out there. My thanks to Osprey Publishing for the review copy.

Publisher: Osprey Publishing
ISBN: 978-1-84603-422-0
Binding: Softcover



PrezNotes

from page 1

I've included a few images of models and airplanes elsewhere on pages 14 and 15.

If my passport issue is not resolved by the meeting I'll be there with lots of green IPMS T-shirts. Bring your checkbooks. Otherwise I'm heading up north to the IPMS Vancouver show.

See you at the meeting (maybe),

Terry

Paint Revelations

from page 13

For myself, acrylics are ideal. By now I have a large collection of regular artist's brushes, two Paasche airbrushes, and way more color bottles than the little handful I got at University Hobbies. I do all my building at the dining room table, where my paints do not disturb the company I get to keep with my wife and cat. "Better living through chemistry", the industry's phrase was...and I endorse it.

2009 Show Schedule

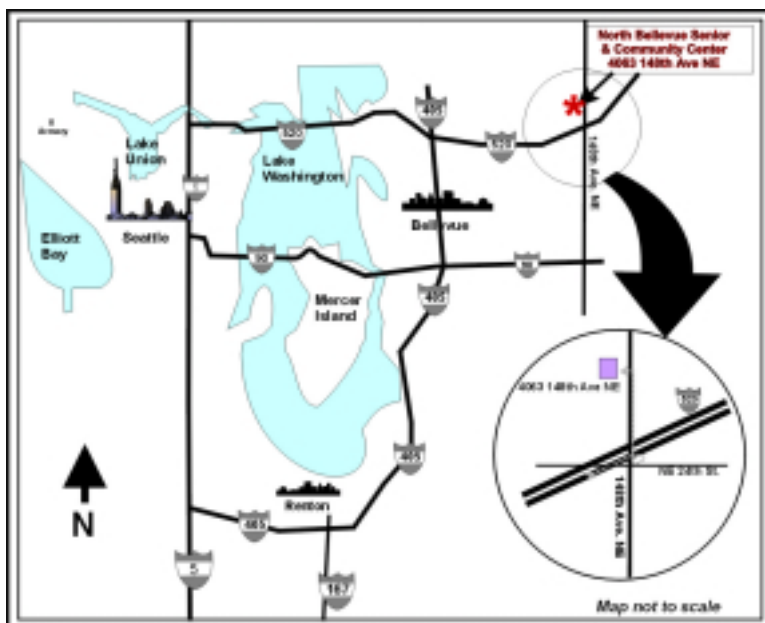
10/10 IPMS Vancouver 39th Annual Fall Model Show and Swap Meet. Bonsor Recreation Complex, 6550 Bonsor, Burnaby, BC. For more information:

<http://www.ipmsvancouver.ca/page2/page2.html>

11/8 Clackamas OSSM

Thanks again to Carl Kietzke.

Meeting Reminder



October 10 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.