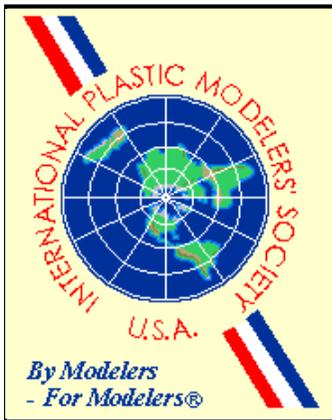


Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
November 2010

PREZNOTES



It certainly is interesting sometimes when someone derives an interest in a model project from an unusual source. I have a couple examples of that recently. A few weeks ago, Jill called me at work and wanted to know if I wanted to go see Elvira. For those not in the know, Elvira, the “Mistress of the Dark” is a well known entertainer portrayed by Cassandra Peterson, best known for her hosting a late night TV program, *Elvira’s Movie Macabre*, where she would introduce and comment about the movie of the night, usually something REALLY bad like *The Beast with A Million Eyes*, and other low grade cheap sci fi/horror films. Her witty commentary (along with some very ample cleavage) made her show quite popular. She happened to be in town to promote a new season of her shows at, of all places, a local Halloween shop. The line to see her was quite long and we waited about three hours in line to see her. We both had a chance to sit down, very briefly, exchange a few pleasantries, and sign autographs. In my case I had her sign a resin kit that has been sitting on my workbench for nearly

10 years. I’ve been hesitating to start it for some long forgotten reason, but now let’s just say I have the proper “inspiration” to finally start it.

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IPMS Seattle Web Site (Webmasters, Norm Filer & Tracy White): <http://www.ipms-seattle.org>

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, WordPerfect, or text 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 2010 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 13

December 11

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

IPMS No.: _____ Name: _____
(leave blank) FIRST M LAST
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Signature (required by PO): _____

Adult: \$25 Junior (17 years old or younger): \$12

Family (Adult dues + \$5, one set magazines, # of membership cards required: _____)

If recommended by an IPMS member, list his/her name and member number _____ (name) _____ (IPMS#)

IPMS/USA P.O. Box: 2475
 North Canton, OH 44720

Check out our web page: www.ipmsusa.org



IPMS Seattle Swap Meet

hosted by Stephen Tontoni

When: Saturday, November 13, 2010; 10:00am

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

Swap meet guidelines/suggestions:

- 1) Anything can be traded at the show that's modeling related
- 2) Kits can be traded or sold
- 3) Due to space limitations, tables will need to be shared (two or more per table, or bring your own table)
- 4) Model kits should be stacked. Large boxes on end are encouraged
- 5) To help others find you, place a sign with your name in front of your pile (paper taped to table is best)
- 6) The more stuff you have, the better your trades will be
- 7) While most trades are 1-1, three way trades will happen; be creative
- 8) HAVE FUN!

PrezNotes

from page 1

Another potential project is gaining a lot of interest with me is the US Navy Centennial of Aviation. A number of aircraft are being repainted in a variety of historic US Navy and Marine colors: A T-45 in prewar yellow wings colors, An HH-60N something or other in WW II three-tone colors, and an S-3 in Battle of Midway era colors. All are really quite spectacular and in my book, have that unusual color scheme that I take quite the fancy for. Unfortunately, my interest in modern US aircraft is rather minimal and of the three subjects I listed above, no models happen to reside in the garage o' kits. That may have to change. I don't even know if there is a kit of the HH-60N and although I know there was a kit of the S-3, I don't know if it's still available in 1/48th scale. I didn't even know the Navy was still flying them! In any event, I am inspired.

This weekend is our first ever swap meet to swap (and/or sell) model stuff. Details are to your left. We'll still have our regular business meeting and a show and tell but will probably delay the start of the meeting to about 11:30 or so.

That's it (for now).

We'll see you at the meeting,

Terry

Pearl Harbor Aircraft Contest Cancelled

Unfortunately, the Pearl Harbor Aircraft contest originally scheduled for our December meeting has been cancelled. However, we'll still be having our annual Holiday Meeting, so munchies and (non-alcoholic) beverages are still very much welcome!

The Museum of Flight Library and Archives Tour

by Jim Schubert

photos by Ken Murphy

WARNING: This is a brazen sales pitch for The Museum of Flight.

On September 2 and again on October 7 Dan Hagedorn, Senior Curator of The Museum of Flight (TMOF), conducted a tour of TMOF's Library and Archives for ten members of the NorthWest Scale Modelers (NWSM). The Library and most of the archived materials are located in the building at the west end of the new sky bridge adjacent to TMOF's outdoor Air Park. The library is available to researchers Mondays through Fridays from 1:00 to 5:00 PM and by appointment otherwise. The Library was started back in the days of the Pacific Northwest Aviation Historical Foundation (PNAHF) before that organization segued into the museum. Initially the keeper of both the PNAHF and the Boeing Archives was Harl Brackin. I believe, from having worked with him, that Harl was diligent in making sure that the PNAHF had a copy of everything that came his way for the Boeing Archives, and vice versa if it related to Boeing. I know that much of what the Boeing Archives has today is the result of Harl having taken it home for safe keeping during the 1969-1971 Boeing crunch when much material was thrown away in a cost saving move, just as much material was thrown out sometime after WWII for the same short-sighted reason. The present quarters of TMOF's Library and Archives are obviously temporary but fortunately the ex Boeing building is very large, very well-built and will do for quite a while until TMOF can build a proper facility. Incidentally, in recognition of the work he did with the PNAHF, Boeing Archives and the foundation of TMOF the Library is named the Harl V. Brackin Library.

Dan threw gee-whiz facts, figures, historical tidbits, anecdotes and aviation asides



Dan Hagedorn, Curator, and Tim Nelson with latest bulk arrival of material for the collection; Terrence McKosh looking for treasure in the background. Note B-17 top-turret and, way in back to upper left, Scramjet model



Stephen Tontoni looking for new tires for his car

at us so fast on the tour that at the end of it I realized I had been listening with such intensity my notes for this article were worthless so I booked to go again on the second tour for the express purpose of taking notes. I reckon it's a sure sign I'm a poor researcher that I, later, found most of what I could have used on TMOF's web site at <http://www.museumofflight.org/> under "COLLECTIONS" in the header bar. Reading it there did not, however, have the impact of seeing it and hearing it all described and explained by the person primarily responsible for it. I recommend you spend some time at the web site to appreciate, at least somewhat, the scope of this world-treasure we have right here convenient to us all. Here are some quickies:

TMOF holds, at least, 3.8 million photo images, 300,000 references, 60,000 magazines, 38,000 books, 14,000 scale drawings, 4,000 technical manuals and 2,000 pamphlets plus lots of other stuff. Nearly 2,000 researchers to date have used TMOF's library. In addition to the collections of locals Pete Bowers, Harl Brackin, Gordy Williams, William Boeing, Sr., Claire



Complete Jumo -004 jet engine from Me 262 Schwalbe

Egtvedt, Ed Wells and Vic Seely, TMOF holds the collections of the Wright Aeroplane Company, Bill Lear, and the Northrop Institute. Pete Bowers' collection alone occupies 300 cubic feet and includes, at least, 1.8 million images as prints, negatives or both. And, as those of us who ever worked with Pete know, it was not at all well organized, which has created an enormous job for TMOF in that regard.

TMOF's mission, simply stated, is to PROTECT, PRESERVE, and PRESENT what they have for the benefit of all. A current personal drive of Dan's is to get TMOF to adopt, and for all the staff to accept, the motto, "ENTHUSIASTS WELCOME HERE". They want whatever you have that you think may of value/interest to other enthusiasts, researchers, writers, and modelers. If you donate books or magazines the items will be evaluated for retention or sale. TMOF keeps the best two of every printed item they get. Redundant items are offered for sale to the public. Proceeds help the Library. The salesroom is open every day; a widely publicized special sale weekend is designated each year; the most recent was October 9 and 10.

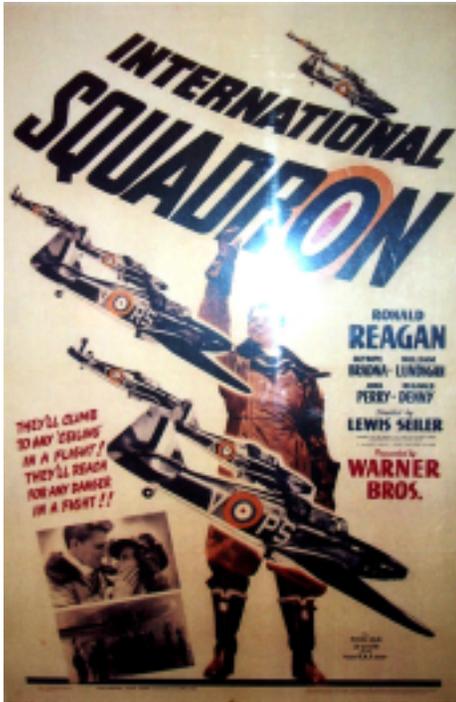
Books, magazines and artifacts are preserved in perpetuity; whatever that takes that current technology permits. Printed matter is digitized but only for ease of access because of the temporary nature of digital material. CDs are reckoned to

have a useable life of only 15 years and we have already seen the passing of punch cards, microfilm, microfiche, and magnetic tape as the newest and best "modern" media for preserving and presenting data. The pyrrhic nature of digital media is exacerbated by the non-availability, after a while, of readers/printers/projectors for them. Newsprint is an especial problem in that no matter what conservators do with it, within economic reason, it's typically only good for about 100 years. Paintings and drawings will be kept in a refrigerated, humidity-controlled environment to ensure their preservation. Such material is presently stored in a closed, cooled room until TMOF acquires proper facilities.

I have hardly touched upon the Archives simply because there is an awful lot of really interesting stuff and it's spread all over TMOF's main campus and at The Storage and Restoration facility at Paine Field in Everett. We saw engines, propellers, wheels, tires, guns, gun turrets, instruments, radios, radars, airplane parts, ordnance, personal gear, logs, models, posters, and much more on the tour. I have seen many engines and other accessories, parts and gear at the Everett facility and in



the basement of the main museum buildings. This whole complex is a vast treasure cave of incalculable value to those who are interested in the history that it represents.



Movie poster for film starring Ronald Reagan

TMOF has a deal with Alaska Airlines where they hold the airline's archival material in trust for five years while it is being sorted out by Alaska, after which ownership reverts to TMOF. To this end the carrier hired some students last summer to make a first-cut at organizing the materials as interns-in-training for the museum. Club member Don Conrard is one of the airline folk who are handling this and he is keeping the photo files for Alaska, which he has digitized for convenience of access and for further identification. He invited me to spend an afternoon reviewing the labeling on the photo collection and I had a great time. The interns did not know airplanes so they had completely scrambled DC-3s with C-46s and had thoroughly mixed the DC-4s, -6s, and -7s. Every picture of the Hamilton Metalplane was ID'd as a Ford Trimotor. Fairchild FC-2s, and F-71s, Bellanca

Skrocks and Pacemakers and Curtiss Robins and pre-gullwing Stinsons were all randomly identified as one or another of this ilk. Don and I relabeled as many as we could. This experience gave us a feel for the problems the museum has as many of their photos, if they have any ID info at all may simply note, "An old airplane".

TMOF is quite backlogged in identifying, sorting and classifying the continuous arrival of new material. This is good because it means the collection is nowhere near becoming static or having a terminal date. The current budget crunch and consequential personnel cuts have slowed the handling of these new materials substantially.

I recommend IPMS-Seattle and NorthWest Scale Modelers members:

1. Visit the web site noted and spend some time following its internal links.
2. Go to the library when you start re-searching your next project. I've found it's best to phone (206-768-7123) or e-mail (jlittle@museumofflight.org) first to identify myself and my project and to make an appointment as it saves time for everyone.
3. Consider what you have in the way of books, artifacts, etc. that you can donate for the greater good of all. I will get back to you all later regarding offers to donate built-up models as that, for a lot of very awkward reasons, is a very awkward subject. For the present do not make such offers unless you have something that simple logic dictates should be in the

museum's collection.

4. Put your vast knowledge of aviation to use for the common good by volunteering to work in the library and archives. Contact John Little at the address above.
5. Volunteer as a docent to use your vast knowledge to help visitors to TMOF. Call Carol Thomson at 206-768-7179 to obtain details.
6. Join The Museum of Flight and become a contributing member supporting this great resource in our midst; it's only \$50 per year. Go to <http://www.museumofflight.org/membership/sign-up-or-renew> to see what that gets you in addition to the satisfaction of not being a freeloader. If you are in either of our great local clubs, it's the right thing to do.



Dan showing a photo album to John Alcorn and Jim Schubert



WWI Lewis gun

Revell 1/12th Scale Torch Custom Chopper

by Jon Fincher

Revell has always had "build it your way" car kits. A few years ago, they came out with a line of custom motorcycle kits designed along these same lines. Based on real choppers from R.M. Kustom, eight different kits were produced with custom motorcycle features - solo seat, stretched and raked frames, bobbed tanks, and custom chrome features. These kits also feature interchangeable parts - seats, chrome, and wheels can be swapped from one kit to another, resulting in easy customization for modelers. As a motorcycle rider and a fan of motorcycle kits, I was excited to get a chance to look at one of these kits, in this case, the Torch.

The kit comes in a standard Revell box, and opening it reveals a lot of plastic - 58 parts to be exact. Four sprues of white parts, a single sprue for clear, and a bag with two "rubber" tires are followed by eight (!) individually wrapped sprues of chrome parts, a sheet of decals, and an eight page instruction book. My only complaint is that the instructions and decals were on the bottom of the box, meaning you have to dig everything out to get at the decals (since my workshop is in

a garage, I store the decals in zip top bags to keep the humidity from ruining them). However, everything repacks into the box easily.

The instructions provided are well-illustrated and easy to read. Most optional parts are called out clearly, and painting and decal options are well marked. The decal sheet is typical Revell quality, and contains options for flames, iron (or Maltese) crosses, skulls, R.M. logos, or red-to-yellow faded panels for the frame and tanks. Most modelers will have decals left over for other projects.

The four white sprues encompass the bike's frame, seat, all the tin (fenders and tank options), the battery box, and exposed primary drive. The frame appears to be a typical custom rigid frame with a small rake built into the neck. Two tank options are provided: a "normal" long tank, and a bobbed one. The single seat provided has flames embossed on it.

The eight chromed sprues contain parts for the engine, front forks, hand and foot controls, and other various bits and bobs. The engine is a normal V-twin engine as made by S&S or Harley Davidson, with a built-in intake for simplicity. The front fork is long and of a normal telescoping type. Parts for a chain drive system, oil tank, transmission, head and tail lights, and

handlebars are also provided. You are also provided with parts for two different exhaust systems, two different wheel options, and two different primary and air cleaner cover options.

The optional and custom parts are the prime selling point for this and the other kits in this series, but they aren't without problems. The exhaust options include short (exit in front of the rear tire) or long (exit alongside the rear tire) pipes, although both options will need the tips drilled out to look realistic. Primary and air cleaner covers options come with embossed flames or iron crosses, but embossing on both are large for the scale. The provided seat has flames embossed on it, but no iron cross seat was provided. The wheels options include two-part spoke wheels and single part billet wheels (I wish I had a set of solid billets as well) - according to my measurements, both sets of wheels log in at a scale 190 rear and a skinny 70 front. Two sets of hand grips and hand levers with minor differences are provided as well, but aren't called out in the instructions.

There are two big issues I am seeing with this kit. The second one is all the chrome - almost everything in this kit is chrome. Cleaning the mold seams on all these chromed parts is going to be enough of a challenge, especially on parts that can't or shouldn't be covered with paint. There are some tiny parts here - such as the hand levers, foot controls, push-rod covers, and tail-light - which will need mold lines removed and chrome replaced before they can be installed. To top that off, mating and cleaning up the finned engine will test not only your patience but your collection of sanding implements. And finally, remember that every chrome part that needs to be glued also needs the chrome removed from the mating surface. I would be plan for, and be ready to replace or cover, all the chrome you see.

However, the chrome isn't the biggest problem. The biggest problem I see with this kit isn't what it comes with, but what is missing. Custom choppers routinely omit things like rear view mirrors and turn signals, so none are provided. However, there are also no hoses or cables of any



continued on page 16

Trumpeter 1/32nd Scale Boeing F/A-18E

by Steve Gallacci

Huge pile of plastic, artfully packaged in a huge box, is the first impression. This is a big and complicated kit of a big and complicated subject. And for the first time in my review building, a kit that is proving to be a real challenge to assemble. This should not be taken so much as a criticism of Trumpeter, but more a matter of a complicated design bravely attempted and largely succeeding.

However, a bothersome design weakness of the kit, common with other Trumpeter products, is in a couple of option features which are not really engineered to be optioned. In this case, the wings can be folded or extended, but extended requires extra creative effort from the modeler.

into the fuselage. An ongoing controversy for many Trumpeter kits is the inclusion of "rubber" tires, hated by some, loved by others, without an option of plastic alternatives.

There is one mystery detail in Step 24. The instructions indicate that a photo-etch strip of metal, part PE5, needs to be glued into the nose gear door, part H24. The mystery is two-fold, why would you need to have the complication of the photo-etch detail? And while the instructions indicate that the photo-etch goes on the inside, the part looks like it ought to go on the outside. I put mine on the outside. Then, a web search found that the real thing would be a fine perforated panel, and on the outside. So in the end, for a really proper duplication, the panel ought to be clear plastic with a very fine pattern decal on it, being too fine for conventional photo-etch, or even just tinted clear plastic.

The model as configured, without a lot of wing stores, does need nose weight. I planned to not display the radar, so would fit the nose with weights, but didn't check the fit first, and discovered a bit of mis-fit. An unfortunate last minute discovery. Alternately, if you just hang the big belly tank on it, the tank nose can be loaded up with some weight.

Most of the rest of the kit is actually fairly straight-forward, wings and control surfaces are simple assemblies, only the leading and trailing edge flaps have any joints that need some attention of putty and sanding, and these are all on the undersides, so you could get sneaky and ignore them. A similar joint runs along the underside of the large LEX. Another seam that really needs attention, and particular care in assembly to avoid making worse is where the rear fuselage side, top, and bottom all come together. No slight to Trumpeter on that, as it is simply a very



Similarly, the refueling receptacle is not really designed to be closed, though theoretically could be built that way.

On the other hand, a feature that is particularly good are cast metal reinforcements for the landing gear, sandwiched between the main halves of each strut. They are very strong and fit stoutly

There is a minimum of photo-etch in the kit otherwise, just the belts for the pilot's ejection seat. The canopy is nice and clear, though it has a mold line up the center. A quick draw with a sharp knife, a little fine sandpaper, and then some Novus plastic polish cleaned it up with minimal problem.

awkward assembly point. The forward fuselage also has a potentially troublesome seam, and extra attention should be paid to that.

The intake ducting has some seams too, but the sub-assemblies can be worked on and the fully assembled intakes are big enough to get putty knives, paint brushes

full of Mr. Surfer, and sanding sticks down to clean things up fairly well. A joint that a modeler might or might not want to mess with is that around the fin installation. It is very convenient to pre-paint the fin and rudder assemblies for the CAG color schemes and simply plug them into place. But the fit is rather gappy. For the VFA-143 scheme, the fin fit would really need filling as it would be all too obvious.

The engines are sort of detailed, but not so well done to really display, and the instructions are not so clear as to how to fit the details as they are on the engine bodies. The only real value of the engines is that they provide a good compressor face for the intake and burner details for the exhaust. However, as there is no provision to display the engines, it is all moot anyway.



There is one small but notable lapse of verisimilitude in the kit, that being the vents on the upper surface of the LEX. The kit has simply a slot/hole in the LEX, and the area is an awkward detail to clean out and trim and has no inside features. The vent would have been better served with the upper panel being a separate piece (panel lines there outline an easy installation) and the insides molded as part of the LEX surface.

Another little lapse is the navigation lights on the upper surface of the LEX, a simple scribed outline on the kit and a bit tricky to paint. It would have been easy enough to do it as a decal or a clear insert. As is, I'd recommend deepening the scribed outline to make filling in the color a little easier.

In general, the kit is fairly conventional, though because the subject has some tricky shapes, the major parts breakdown can be a challenge. Most of the fuselage is made up of large upper and lower halves, with the lower forward fuselage being a separate multi-part sub-assembly. Since the final assembly for these major parts can be awkward, even disastrous if the modeler isn't very careful, I've listed some alternate assembly sequences that will make the job a little easier.

Recommended alternate assembly sequences and details to deal with:

Step 3

Only apply glue to the lower edges of the nose wheel well group when installing it into the lower fuselage halves, that will avoid unintentionally "pinching" the fuselage, complicating later assembly to the upper fuselage. Be aware that the wheel well is supposed to fit into positioning tabs and slots in the fuselage but the fit is kind of iffy and will need work. Better not to add glue in those areas. In theory, the cockpit tub will later fit onto the top of the wheel well, but I would recommend removing the mounting point from the wheel well and cockpit tub, lest the final assembly not quite match and the mounts actually get in the way.

Step 7

I was going to suggest gluing the lower forward fuselage assembly to the lower center fuselage and clean up any joints, but the fit to the lower fuselage is actually pretty good and the joint is easily accessible. However, the forward fuselage to upper fuselage joint fit is more critical, and better to have the forward fuselage group loose for installation at that step. Nevertheless, the next thing to do is glue the inner sections of the intake scoops, parts F1 and F2, to the fuselage sides, parts A2 and A8 before gluing the fuselage sides to the lower fuselage, and only glue along the outer edges, allowing the scoop to be a bit loose to adjust for later installation to the LEX and upper fuselage.

Steps 8 to 17 and beyond

If you intend to build the kit with the wing

extended, glue the lower inner and outer wing halves together first, allowing the glue joint to properly harden before doing anything else, as it is a simple unsupported butt joint. Then I would recommend adding some supplemental re-enforcement to the joint, if not a full span spar, before attaching the upper wing halves. I would recommend **not** fitting the control surfaces to the wings until after the wings and fuselage have all been assembled. There are some joints that need attention and clean up, and the surfaces would be in the way if they were fitted. If the wings are extended and the control surfaces are to be set in the level position, I'd recommend the inner and outer sections should be done at the same time to allow adjustments between them. I set the outer sections first and then later found there wasn't enough slack in the inner sections alone to align them neatly.

Step 18

Glue in the LEX bottom and deal with the joint gaps there before installing any other parts. Before gluing in the cockpit tub to the upper fuselage, test fit the upper fuselage to the lower fuselage, to make sure there is a good joint. If there is a problem with width, how the cockpit tub is glued in can help correct that, or make it worse, if you are not careful. Also test fit the canopy to the cockpit opening to make sure that matches as well.

Step 22

I'd recommend fitting the wings to the upper fuselage first, as they do not simply plug into the fuselage sides. The joints can be fought with (you will almost certainly need to fight with the exact alignment of the wing to fuselage joints) without the complication of the lower fuselage.

Before joining the upper to lower fuselage, I'd really recommend adding some kind of re-enforcement to the elevator mount points. The kit parts would have the elevator base stub plug into a simple hole in the fuselage, not nearly enough substance to hold the considerable weight of the large slabs of the elevators. I used a piece of heavy acrylic, CA glued between the inside of the fuselage and the engine,

to use as an extra glue surface and mount for a steel pin that will go into the elevator base stub. The forward fuselage group will fit into the lower fuselage and most of the LEX surface without any real problem, but where things could get tricky, and where fit is critical, is the forward edge in front of the LEX. Test fit, test fit, test fit.

Step 26

The refueling probe looks okay, but the recess for it is unconvincing, and if you want to build it closed, the door, part F11, needs all the back detail removed and a lot of trimming to fit.



The decals are very thin, so much so that I, at least, had some trouble maneuvering the individual decals into place without having them fold or crumple. Very tricky to deal with, but they settle down very nicely. As with other recent Trumpeter kits, the decals for the cockpit side and front panels will conform to nearly all the lumps and bumps. However, there are a couple particularly prominent details on the main instrument panels that ought to be trimmed down, otherwise the decals will tend to "tent" on the high spots and risk distorting as they lay down. Also, the side panel decals were apparently printed before the side panels were fully tooled, and that portion of the decal detail is just a block of color. You will need to hand-paint that part of the panels. The number call-outs in the instructions versus what is actually printed on the decal sheets don't always match, but not so much to be a problem, as the instructions are otherwise fairly clear as to where things are supposed to go. A small disappointment regarding all the

decals that go with the ordnance is no color bands or stencils for the two AIM-9s. A little tip, the decals for the electro-luminescent strips are not the same length and cannot be interchanged between the locations, and the printed panel outline around them is inappropriate and could be cut away.

A further bit of research found that the exact lay of the VFA-31 red fin tips is a little different than the decals, and the red tips should be duplicated on the inner surfaces of the fins. Further, while the kit shows the VFA-31 machine's belly tank as "silver" and the "Tomcatters" decal is in black, available photos show the tank in light ghost gray and the text in low-vis gray, though to be fair, that detail might have existed for a special occasion.

The kit instructions have named colors to go with manufactures color codes, handy if you don't have access to the specific paints. However, the instructions are rather limited in details and are incorrect or miss some call outs entirely. For example, there are open avionics bays on both sides of the fuselage, but no color instructions for them at all. The color three views of the overall model don't clearly show the demarcation of the upper dark ghost gray to lower light ghost gray (partly due to the limited contrast of the colors, but some artistic license could have been done to make things clearer) and the radomes on all the machines are called out in "radome tan" when they appeared to be light ghost gray in real life. I would strongly recommend doing some supplemental research for painting and marking details, even before starting the kit, to make sure you are prepared to take care of those features as you proceed.

There is a huge collection of underwing stores included in the kit. However, on-line discussions of the features mention that several of the weapons are inappropriate for the plane and/or inaccurate in themselves, or lack details appropriate for USN operations. Be that as it may, as a review build of the kit, the parts are nearly all are cylinders that need extra care to achieve

proper roundness. I found that some of the missiles, if they were glued with liquid cement (I used Testors liquid) and immediately clamped together and set aside, the two halves would slowly creep out of round before the glue dried, to disastrous effect. Some of the AGMs also had a problem in that the aligning pins actually get in the way of properly getting the halves to line up. On the other hand, the LGBs tail ends all but snapped together perfectly, but the nose ends want to slide around if given the chance. Several weapons have folding wings that could be set open or closed, neat for a dismounted fire-power style display, but the AGM-84H has the wings made only in the open position, not the correct configuration for being mounted on the plane.

Mounting the ordnance is another thing entirely. Presumably, the weapons sets are a common product for many 1/32nd modern US aircraft, but the mounting details on many of the items don't match the F/A-18 kit. While the kit instructions have a diagram to show which pylon carries which weapon, some of the kit parts are not so clear as to exactly how some of them are positioned on the pylons. Specifically, the AIM-120 + rail assemblies are supposed to fit to wing pylons, but exactly where on the pylons? And the AIM-120 fitted to the fuselage AIM-7 mounts have carry brackets, but where exactly on the AIM-120 body do the brackets set, and at what angle relative to the fuselage? Similarly, the mount pins on the pylons don't match the mount holes on the racks, bombs or missiles. Then, again, the previously mentioned discussion of appropriate weapons for the model also points out that the load diagram doesn't reflect actual load arrangements.

Overall, the kit will go together into a very large and striking build, but this is one kit that I would only recommend to experienced modelers who are good at tricky builds and problem solving. Further, while the kit has lots of details, the included instructions actually let the potential of the kit down. There is a feeling that the kit was rushed, with missing call outs and poorly

considered assembly notes in the instructions, and the provided weapons did not include appropriate types typically carried by the F/A-18E.

With a rewritten instruction sheet that includes more painting information and clearer part installation details, possibly a decal sheet with some adjustments and corrections (would a multi-part dorsal spine decal along with the current cheat line plus painted dorsal option be possible?) and a few weapons that better match actual operational use, this kit would be more accessible to more modelers and make for a truly outstanding kit.

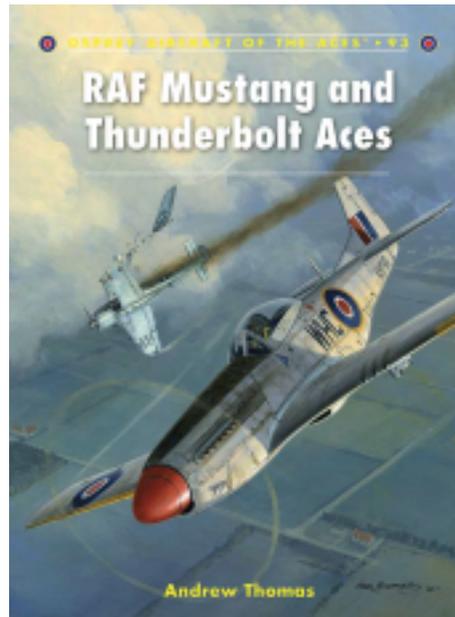
The overall finish is Model Master light and dark ghost gray enamels, the light ghost gray had a little white added to increase the contrast along the demarcation, then some Gloss-cote to provide a hard finish and help with decal application, then a coat of Dull-cote to even out the finish a bit. The black dorsal spine is not quite correctly laid out but was done with Alclad gloss black base, as were the fins. The added red inner fin tips were a mix of Humbrol acrylics from the Wallace and Grommet "Antipesto" van kit. The white parts were done to best effect with a base of Model Master flat white enamel and then a finish coat of Tamiya gloss white acrylic. I found out too late that the engine intakes were suppose to be light ghost grey around the mouth. The nose landing gear strut scissor lower half is missing on the build, lost while being handled.

I was told that some acrylics can be thinned with lacquer thinner, and the Tamiya was my first attempt at doing so and worked very well. Everything was airbrushed with an Iwata Revolution.

Finally, I have decided I really don't like applying long thin decals, like stripes and such. And the kit build suffered for it. Were I to try to do this again, as much as I also don't like masking off lots of painting details, I'd rather paint those things. It is a finishing feature I did not enjoy, entirely not a fault of the kit or the kit decals.

***RAF Mustang and Thunderbolt Aces*, by Andrew Thomas**

reviewed by Robert Allen



With the number of volumes in Osprey's *Aircraft of the Aces* series nearing the century mark, it's not surprising that areas which were touched upon in earlier volumes are being revisited and expanded upon. The seventh book in the series covered RAF Mustang aces, but only as an adjunct to the story of its use by the USAAF 9th and 15th Air Forces. Only 16 pages were devoted to RAF use of the Mustang in that book; in this new volume, the situation is reversed, with RAF Mustangs getting the lion's share of the text, except for eight pages devoted to RAF use of the Thunderbolt.

As is well known, the Mustang was developed for the RAF by North American, but the early Allison-powered versions didn't see service with Fighter Command due to their poor high altitude performance. They were hot rods at low level, though, so they were given to Army Co-Operation squadrons for use as tactical reconnaissance and *Rhubarb* aircraft. The Mustang drew first blood over Dieppe in August 1942, and appropriately enough,

the first Mustang kill was achieved by an American flying with the RCAF, Hollis Hills, who later became an ace flying Hellcats with the US Navy.

With the introduction of the Merlin engine, the Mustang came into its own, and Andrew Thomas covers the varied use of RAF Mustang Mk.III's and Mk.IV's flying bomber escort, fighting V-1's over southern England, and providing support to the troops in Normandy, Italy, and the Balkans. Only 13 RAF/Commonwealth pilots shot down five or more aircraft while flying the Mustang, but many more aces scored at least one victory on the type.

This is more than can be said for the Thunderbolt – not only did no RAF pilots score five victories on the type, among the few air-to-air kills it had, only one ace scored a single kill while flying it! That's no fault of the aircraft or its pilots – the Thunderbolt didn't see service with the RAF until September 1944, and then only in Burma. By that time, fighter opposition in the theater was rare, and the Thunderbolt was mainly used as a ground attack aircraft, a role that its load carrying ability and long range made it eminently suitable for. The small amount of text devoted to RAF use of the Thunderbolt in an "aces" book is understandable – fortunately, the RAF's use of the Thunderbolt has been better described in an excellent book, *Royal Air Force Thunderbolts*, by Geoff Thomas, published by Air Research Publications in 1987. That book is really the only one you'll ever need on the subject.

As with all Osprey books, the photos and color plates are as important as the text. While RAF Mustangs did not usually display the nose art seen on USAAF P-51's, there are some very attractive color schemes shown for modelers to consider. There's a shark-mouthed example from No. 112 Squadron, and I especially like the NMF Mk.IV from No. 442 Squadron with a yellow anti-glare panel.

This is a well-written, nicely illustrated book that does justice to its subject. If you have any interest in RAF Mustangs, I'd recommend it.

Airfix 1/48th Scale Bf 109E-1/E-3/E-4

by Hal Marshman Sr

I received this kit today from Squadron On-Line. Service was moderately prompt, and the price was right, including postage. I ended up paying a few cents less than MSRP, which is about \$25 USD. I'm here to tell you that you do get a lot for your bucks. What follows are my impressions after inspection of the kit and instructions.

The kit is cast in semi soft light gray plastic on two sprues, with one clear sprue. There are quite a few parts on these sprues, allowing for many variations in building, as well as the different parts designed to cater to the different versions advertized. The clear sprue carries three windscreens, two swing canopies, and two rear sections. The E-1 through -3 versions use the round-topped parts, the later versions utilize the square-topped. The round-topped rear quarter part shows no metal brace down through the top center, and info gleaned from the "Experten" on the net says that the brace is on the inside part, but not the outside. The square-topped swing canopy is wrong, as it shows the heavy side and top framing of the later -G variants. The real -E canopy merely showed the fact that there were two pieces of glass, the forward of which could be slid back behind the first. This is the most glaring error I could find in the entire kit, and can be rectified with aftermarket vacformed parts, or the canopy section from any other -E or earlier kit. I should mention that this kit provides for Adolph Galland's E-4, and provides the separate windscreen that accomodated Galland's "sighting" scope. Of course the scope itself is also provided on one of the gray sprues.

The castings themselves are very smooth, and appear to be blemish free. Surface detail is of the engraved variety, and nicely done. Did I say there are lots of parts? They even give you separate faces for both the front and rear detailed faces of

the underwing radiators. The cockpit features a separate oxygen system, and separate throttle quadrant - as far as I know, this is a first for 1/48th 109 kits. Although it's not mentioned, there's a tropical filter for the supercharger intake, if you'd like to go that route. There are three prop spinners, the usual flat-nosed one, a pointed one, and finally an elongated, pointed spinner. Because the kit allows for both an E-1 and the later E-3, there are different gun port inserts for the leading edge of the wing, and individual cannon

read on the net, nor were they spoken of in the *Fine Scale Modeler* article in the November issue. Basically, there are release pin marks in the fuselage cockpit inner sides, two to each side. Depending on your painting technique, you may be able to hide these. Not so hideable are the release pin marks in the ceiling of the wheel wells. Right plumb in the center, between the two cast-in ribs. Don't fix it, and it's guaranteed they'll stick out like a neon sign.



bulges for the wing's underside. Of course, the leading edge slats and flaps are separate, allowing them to be poseable. The tires show weight, with inserts for the spoked wheel detail. Here's something different: separate gear is given, allowing the landing gear to be retracted if you wish to pose the model in a flying condition, and yes, there's a pilot with poseable arms to put beneath the canopy. The cowling is removeable, and would expose an engine cast into the fuselage sides with separate motor mounts. Control surfaces are separate, for both the wings and tail. Airfix provides for small bombs, a large bomb, and a drop tank as ordnance, with the proper ETC mount for each. There may be more options in this box, but I'll not discover those until I get into the build.

I am afraid I have to tell you about a couple of shortcomings. These items have not been mentioned in any reviews I've

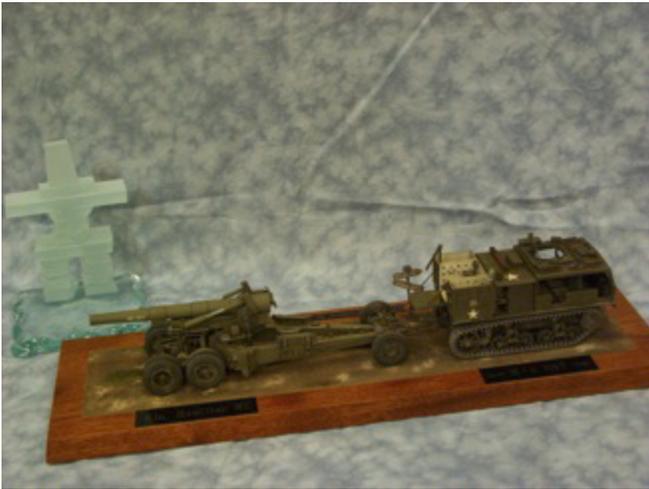
Airfix gives you a twelve-page booklet for instruction steps, and with all the variables, it's pretty well necessary. There's also a four-page booklet with the parts map and three full color enderings of the color schemes and decal positioning, presented from the top and bottom plan views, and left and right profiles. As for the decals themselves, it's a small sheet, but the national markings are there, minus the swastika, all the stencilling is there and the individual markings for the three airplanes catered to. I'll reserve judgement on the decals, as I've had pretty bum luck with Airfix decals lately.

If this kit goes together as well as it looks, all I can say is you get an awful lot for your money, particularly when you consider the price of the Japanese kits, all of which are now selling for 45 bucks these days, and do not give you anywhere near as many options.

IPMS Vancouver Show Photos

photos by Stephen Tontoni, Jacob Russell, and IPMS Vancouver

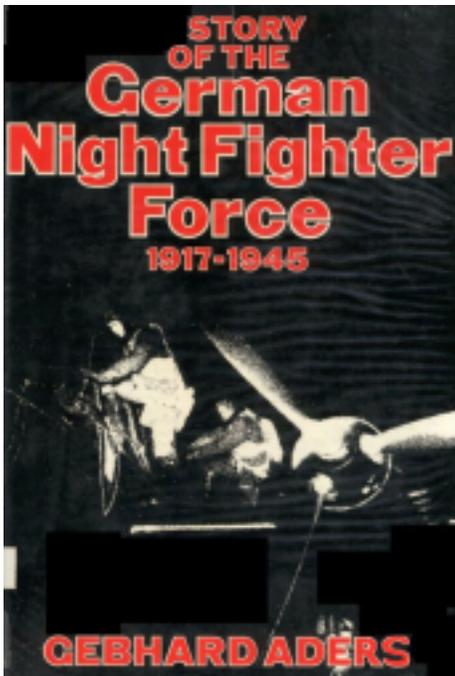
IPMS Vancouver held its annual show on October 9. The model count this year was 441 models entered, an increase from last year. Several IPMS Seattle modelers took home trophies, including George Stray for Best Armour Allied or NATO, and also for Best Armour - Axis or Warsaw Pact; Mike Millette for Best Sci-Fi or Real Space Vehicle; and Tim Nelson for Best Civilian Aircraft. I hope to have a full list of IPMS Seattle category winners for the next newsletter.



Hurricane Bookshelf - German Perspective: Defending the Night

by Scott Kruize

Last time, you remember, the 'Hurricane Bookshelf' reviewed three books, all entitled 'Night Fighter'. It wasn't quite enough: at column's end, I promised to look up more information about German night fighter operations during the Second World War.



Our esteemed Editor, Mr. Allen, informed me that an excellent source would be the book pictured here, *Story of the German Night Fighter Force 1917 to 1945*. Gebhard Aders wrote this book in German and it was first published in 1978 in Stuttgart. Jane's Publishing Co. Ltd. copyrighted and printed the first English translation a year later. American and British versions have been printed; the one I read, 284 pages long, was printed by Fakenham Press Limited in Fakenham, Norfolk, England...and just as Robert said, I was able to get it from the Bellevue Branch of the King County Library System. (Good thing...I'm still in 'austerity mode'...).

As aviation buffs know, the airplane went off to war while still in its early teens, and World War I ground it into the caldron of technological experimentation that also introduced chemical warfare, radio monitoring, and unrestricted submarine warfare. Every use for military aviation was invented, uses that would reach terrible fruition in World War II. So the first chapter of this book is entitled 'The Beginnings of Night Fighting in World War I'.

By the time the war ended, the basic pattern of defending against nocturnal aerial attack, with searchlights, light and heavy anti-aircraft artillery, detection devices, ground control information centers, and specialized night interceptors, had all been tentatively worked out. Chapter Two covers developments between the wars, and with Chapter Three, the night fighting over Germany in the second war begins, occupying the entire rest of the book.

The cliché phrase 'exhaustively researched' is correctly applied to this book. The author and associates went through the mass of government and military records, a surprising amount of which survived the war. The text is quite specific, all the time, about which units were involved in each time period. Sometimes the level of detail is a bit much for readers just trying to understand the general line of this aspect of history, but the information is all there: the evolution of radar, ground-based interception control, airborne interception equipment and techniques, the cost of the battles raging over Germany. The different operational types are described in detail.

For example, I always thought it was quite odd that the Dornier Do 217, which the Luftwaffe classified as a heavy bomber, should have been converted to a fighter. But nearly 400 were made and it turned out to provide a very useful supplement to the rest of the German night fighter force, as they had the longest range and the greatest endurance, a capability enabling the 217s to stay with the Royal Air Force bomber streams for long periods of time,



sometimes following them all the way back to their bases in England. There's additional information about the high price of, and the difficulties with, the Heinkel He 219.



The Focke-Wulf Ta 154's story makes it clear why this was 'a plane that never was'. And at the end of the story, the unquestioned superiority of jets is noted, as a few Me 262s, in the hands of very skilled 'experten', proved able to engage and destroy at will any Allied warplane.



Besides the technical information, politics gets some treatment. It seems General Kammhuber failed to protect German cities from being burned by the British, not because of lack of ability, or even because adequate resources to stop the Allied bombers couldn't be had. It was much more because of economic and political decisions made above him, some by the

Fuehrer himself. Several times in the book, the author comments on the unrealistic, sometimes bizarre decisions made with different individuals trying to assert personal power in Nazi Germany, all while the enemy is busily beating down the gates everywhere. He can't understand, any more than I can, how the people couldn't even unite in their own common defense!

After the long story, the book concludes with a set of appendices that would please the most minutia-minded critic. There are diagrams of the different radar equipment types' effectiveness, organization charts, and strength returns of the night fighter units, lists of aces' victory scores, even summaries of camouflage schemes and unit marking, for modelers like us!

A technical side note: the Bristol Beaufighter's harm to the German night defense is well noted, and the huge effect of Mosquito night fighters and intruders. No quarrel there, but as an American, I was interested in what effect our premier night fighter had on the German perspective. Here's what Aders wrote:

'...the American night fighter, Northrop P-61 Black Widow, was not particularly dangerous to the German (night fighter) crews. ...Bf-110 and Ju-88 pilots could easily out-turn the unwieldy American plane and shoot down several in the process.'

I don't know...I've read the personal account of a P-61 pilot, who in training loved to 'mix it up' with Thunderbolts and Mustangs, often getting on their tails after turning fights, to the great surprise of the smaller planes' pilots. And here's a quote from another book on the Hurricane Bookshelf, *The Illustrated Directory of Fighting Aircraft of WWII*, by Bill Gunston: "Despite its great size the P-61 had very good maneuverability, in part because of the patented spoiler-type lateral control and Deceleron aileron/airbrake surfaces."

Sounds like, just as at the end of the last column, I've still got more homework to do!

Airfix 1/72nd Scale MiG-15

by Jacob Russell

The pilots of Western jets had a rude awakening when the MiG-15 appeared over the skies of Korea during the Korean War. The MiG-15 with its 35° swept wings had a far better rate of climb and turning circle than any plane in the air forces of the Western forces. It was not until the arrival of the North American F-86 Sabre that the balance of air power shifted to the Allies. The MiG-15 was used by the Warsaw Pact Countries as well as North Korea and was produced under license in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and China.



The MiG-15 comes in Airfix's new lidded cardboard box with computer-generated artwork. 53 bagged parts are attached to four sprues, one of which contains the single clear part, the canopy. My overall impression of this new kit is positive. There is some good raised rivet detail around the fuselage wing roots. The panel lines follow the current Airfix tradition: wide and of a consistent depth. The air brake doors are separate pieces, as are the three gun barrels which will benefit from either having their ends drilled out or replacement.

The wheel wells are shallow but have good detail and so do the landing gear. The characteristic wing fences are nicely done and of an appropriate width, albeit slightly over scale. Two different types of wing-mounted drop tanks are included and you get a pair of each - that's a nice touch. The jet exhaust nozzle is shallow and simplified. The latter comment also applies to the cockpit, wherein decals are supplied for the instrument panel and side consoles.

But this is typical for 1/72nd scale and with a closed canopy you won't see much anyway so the level of detail is appropriate.

The ejection seat is overly simplified however and I recommend either an aftermarket seat from Pavla or the use of the supplied pilot figure as he is very good indeed. Make sure you pack in the recommended three grams of weight before closing up the fuselage to avoid a tail sitter, which is explained in the instructions. These are well-illustrated with a logical 18-step build sequence. Color callouts are for Humbrol enamels.

The kit includes decals for three different planes: 1) MiG-15 bis, Russian Air Force, 1950s. Overall natural metal with red lip to front intake and red fin flash. 2) MiG-15 bis, possibly flown by I.P. Galyshevsky, 351 IAP, Democratic People's Republic of Korea Air Force (DPRKAF), North Korea, 1952. Sand with Army Green stripes over black lower surfaces. 3) MiG-15 bis, 101 Reconnaissance Wing, Magyar Légier (Hungarian Air Force), Szolnok, Hungary, 1971. Sand, brown and Army Green over Aircraft Blue lower surfaces.

The decal sheet is comprehensive. The decals are in register and clearly printed. The sheet includes national markings for all three decal options, stencils and wing walk decals. The green centers for the Hungarian national markings are printed separately, so look in the mirror if these end up off center... One of the nicest things about this sheet is that there are two sets of stencils, a blue set for the natural metal Russian bird, and a red set for the Korean or Hungarian MiGs.

There have been discussions on the Airfix Tribute Forum and other online forums about the kit's accuracy, concerning the fuselage length, cockpit location, fin/rudder height, etc. I checked 1/72nd scale plans from the 4+ Publications MiG-15 monograph and if the plans are accurate the Airfix fuselage is too long, the fin and rudder are too tall and the angle of the fin leading edge is too steep. The cockpit appears to be in the proper location. The

wings are both narrow in width and shallow in chord, and the wing tip panel line is in the wrong location. The tail planes are also too narrow and their panel lines are inaccurate. Various doors and inspection ports on the fuselage halves are depicted as identical on both sides and they are not. The main wheels are also noticeably undersized. At this point one might ask if any of these discrepancies would be noticeable to the average modeler, and does the finished product look like a MiG-15? The answer to the former is probably not, and the answer to the latter is YES, absolutely.

I like this kit! It is cheap, reasonably accurate, nicely detailed, and it will be easy to build. It will look fine out of the box. Yes there are some questions about its accuracy but it looks like a MiG-15. The ambitious modeler can add useful detail with the new photo-etched set from Eduard and a resin ejection seat from Pavla. Aftermarket decals for the MiG-15 are plentiful although the three kit decal options are just fine with me. Airfix is on a roll with their new line of kits and I like what they are doing. I highly recommend this kit. I purchased the review sample at Skyway Model Shop.

References

MiG-15, all variants, by Jirí Bašný, Yefim Gordon, Michal Ovcáčík, Karel Susa and Stanislav Skala, 4+ Publications, 1997. (This book is highly recommended, and it contains both 1/72nd and 1/48th scale plans.)

[Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl and www.internetmodeler.com for permission to use Jacob's, Steve's, and Jon's articles. - ED]

Also missing are certain custom options you regularly see on 1:1 scale custom bikes. "Springer" style front ends are very common on custom motorcycles, but there is no option for a sprung front fork (telescoping tube front forks are common among all the kits, so you'll have to scratch-build or get resin replacements). Real custom choppers also routinely omit the front brake, and can have rear drum brakes - neither option is provided in this kit, although modifications for an omitted front brake is easily handled.

Revell has tried to capitalize on the "build it your way" concept in the Custom Chopper line of motorcycle kits. For the most part, it appears to be successful - my example kit had plenty of customization options and possibilities. However, for 1:1 motorcycle enthusiasts like me, the lack of crucial details (cables, hoses, and structural customizations like different forks) means there's a lot of work ahead to make a truly "custom" motorcycle. Further, all the chrome means building this kit properly will require a lot of clean-up work. Revell rates this as a Skill 2 kit - while the parts count and simple assembly support that, the required additions and chrome clean-up required makes me wish they had a Skill 2.5.

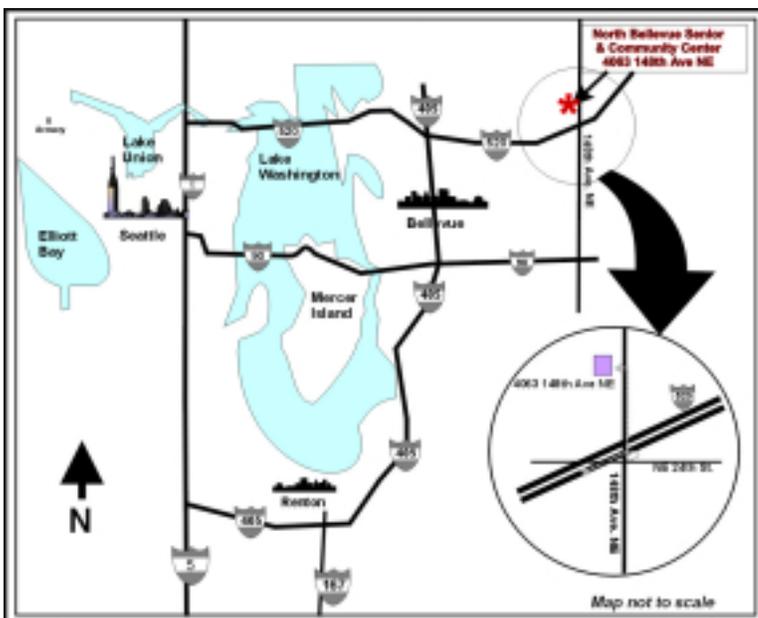
Revell Torch Custom Chopper

from page 7

kind - no fuel lines, no brake lines, and no clutch or throttle cables. There is no connection between the gas tank and the engine, or between the brake levers and the brake calipers. If you're like me, you've been spoiled by building Tamiya kits that come with hoses and cables, so you'll need to dip into the parts box to add these vital details.

Meeting Reminder

**November 13
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.