

Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
September 2011

PREZNOTES



Do We Really Need Any More Members?

One of the recurring themes of the Chapter Presidential election was “what are you going to do to attract new members” to IPMS Seattle. However, I would like to ask the question back: “do we really need any more new members?”

According to Treasurer Spencer Tom, we have approximately 115 paid-up members in IPMS Seattle. And each and every meeting we attract between 60 and 80 of those members to turn out for the good of the order. This puts us as one of the top three chapters in IPMS USA. And despite putting on a very expensive Spring Show each year, as well as paying for our meeting rooms each month, the club accounts look good. So why, exactly, do we need more members?

The obvious answer is that we need more young members, in order to continue the

club’s existence down the road. There isn’t one of us who are getting any younger, and the average age of the club’s members is fast approaching retirement age, not

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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 2011 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.

September 10
November 12

October 8
December 10

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

IPMS No.: _____ Name: _____
(leave blank) 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#)

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Do We Really Need Any More Members?

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college age. And perhaps it isn't more members we want, but more that many of us feel a sense of needing to "spread the word" about the hobby, and encourage people to take up our wonderful pastime, even if they don't join our club? And to both ideas, I would fully agree.

On Sunday, August 28th, your intrepid Executive Board attempted to do both at the same time: Spencer Tom, Jon Fincher, Eric Christianson, and I loaded up our vehicles with chairs, tables, a 10' x 10' canopy, together with built-up models, model kits, and various modeling tools, and headed over at 8AM to set up the very first IPMS Seattle "display booth" at Bothell's RiverFest street fair. The fair opened "for business" at 10AM, and from then until shutdown at 3PM, the four of us worked on kits, and showed off our various models to the enthusiastic public. We were a great hit with the kids, and the adults too. Boy AND Girls, Men AND Women. Who doesn't like to see a well constructed historical miniature, or sci-fi subject? Our efforts probably added a member, maybe two. And we gave away lots of flyers detailing the club, and our Spring Show. We all judged it a great success and a bunch of fun as well.

However: "Ask not what your E-Board can do for your Chapter, but ask yourself what you can do for your Chapter" to twist the great words of President John F. Kennedy. The above RiverFest expedition took a lot of planning, and basically an entire day out of your E-Board members' lives. And while we had fun, we can't be expected to do all the work here. As I have said before, it isn't my chapter, it is OUR chapter. If you think such events are of value to the Chapter, then surely it is up to all of us to help out, not just a select few?

There are a number of ways we can attempt to attract younger generations into the fold of model building, and generally

publicizing the hobby to the general public. One such is the current project of member John Newcome, who is setting up a model display at his local King County Library. I encourage everyone out there to help John in his endeavors in this area. Another opportunity to reach younger people is to contact your local scout group, and ask them if they have thought of having the boys earn their Model Design and Building merit badge? Volunteer to come by to a meeting or two, and show them what it is you do for your hobby: how to use the tools properly, how to select a good kit, etc. If interested, here is a link that tells you what is required for this merit badge: http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/~link.aspx?id=0A60BCF986794C2EB7CDCF6EB24C0D8E&_z=z

Another option we need to push with more vigor is our "Make and Take" program at the Spring Show. Again, John Newcome launched such a program at this year's Spring Show, and he will need volunteers to help expand it for the 2012 show. Why not talk to him about volunteering here?

Other possibilities? The E-Board is discussing contacting local hobby shops, such as Galaxy Hobby in Lynnwood, or local HobbyTown USA stores, about offering modeling demonstrations. These two particular stores offer us the opportunity to come into contact with kids who are into other hobbies besides model building, such as RC. And we are also discussing setting up model displays at such events as Air Shows: the Flying Heritage Museum has weekend flying displays of 1/1 aircraft all summer long, why not ask about setting up some model displays at one or more of these?

All the above take organization, and a group of willing volunteers. The E-Board is keen to promote the hobby, if you the members are keen to help as well. It's up to you how well we succeed.

Andrew

[Thanks to Brian Hennessey and Eric Christianson for the RiverFest photos - ED.]



Beating the Heat and Eating the Meat: A Perspective on the 2011 IPMS-USA Nationals Held in Omaha, Nebraska

article by Eric Christianson

photos by Eric Christianson and
Djordje Nikolic

Tick-tock, eight-o'clock. 8:00 AM that is. I have been waiting for this day for months, and now I'm just waiting for the airport shuttle. The nice man is coming to take me and my Nebraska-bound accoutrement to the airport. This includes my laptop, a couple of pair of socks, and an enormous empty suitcase in which I could fit a small family along with their golf clubs. I purchased this suitcase specifically for the IPMS Nationals Vendor Room, for I am embarking on my annual Daddy vacation – and planning to do all I can for the economy. Yes I can!

After a relatively uneventful flight through 110-degrees-in-the-shade-at-6:00 PM-are-you-kidding-me-Dallas, I arrive at the Omaha airport to be swept up like royalty (by fellow Seattleite Woody Yeung) for the 25-minute drive to the hotel. After checking in we proceeded directly to the bar for a beer. Some things never change – I am at the Nationals with an ice-cold Stella in my hand and four days of models – and nothing but models – to think about. Life is good.

Tim Nelson and I are rooming together and we expect Djordje Nikolic to join us for three nights. We soon learn, however, that the hotel won't provide a roll-away bed for him. Consequently, when Djordje arrives he will find out that he gets to sleep on the floor. Bummer! Luckily, the hotel WILL provide extra pillows and blankets, so we decide to construct a little clubhouse for Djordje to sleep in. Apparently from the hotel's point of view, a roll-away bed is a fire hazard, but a mountain of linen in the



Left to right: Tim Nelson, Djordje Nikolic, Warwick Wright, Eric Christianson, Woody Yeung

middle of the floor is not. Must be a mid-western thing.

The next morning I am up early and proceed to the registration area. Before I even orient myself among the hustle and bustle, a nice looking woman is asking me what my name is. After I tell her, she disappears and returns in seconds with my registration bag, badge, and t-shirt. Now THIS is service! My mind reels at how far the Nationals have come in three short years since Orange County.

I learn I have to wait 30 minutes for the Vendor room to open so I waltz into the model room to find hundreds of models already on display. Eventually the count would exceed 2,400 – a new record and nearly double the count from last year's show in Phoenix. I see a fantastic 1/72nd scale Dora German Railway gun to my left and, looking around I recognize dozens of other masterpieces I can't wait to examine. This is going to be a good show!

I briefly drop in on a Badger Airbrush seminar for a few minutes to listen to the company president talk about cleaning his

airbrushes, and then I head for the (now-open) Vendor room, which is actually one of three large rooms. I am told that the multi-room setup is less a result of venue issues as it is a necessity driven by the number of vendors that signed up at the last minute – they just kept coming! Whatever the case, everyone is here, and the bounty is plentiful!

It is 9:30 on Thursday morning. Before the Sherman Tank Seminar at noon I manage to spend more than half of my vendor budget, starting with the UMM-USA guy, where, like last year, I gush like a goofy teenager at his new tools and supplies. He has a new punch set for \$50 and a better Grab Handler for another \$20. These are superior tools and since I normally have to go to Jim Schubert's house to use his stuff, I rationalize the purchase in, say, a micro-second and lay down my money. Even though the booth is swamped, the harried young modeler-entrepreneur takes the time to demonstrate to every customer how to use what they are purchasing. This guy deserves to make a lot of money – and his award-winning models only help. It is only after the banquet that I realize that he

has not entered any models in competition this year – most likely as a result of running his business. Too bad for all of us – but only kind of!

Tim and I want to break for lunch but find that there is only a single restaurant available for both connected (sold-out) hotels. This will remain an irritant for the entire show. We decide to walk through the 86% Nebraska humidity to a nearby pizza joint that serves beer. Eight minutes later we are sweat-drenched and drinking Schlitz and Pabst Blue Ribbon respectively. Crazy stupid hot.

We return in time to attend either an Alclad seminar (which Tim attends) or a Sherman seminar (where I go). But soon I decide to return to my hotel room to change clothes and clean up, vowing never to leave the air-conditioned hotel again. And besides, the Sherman discussion turns out to be a nuts-and-bolts, Birkbeck-ian kind of deal, not exactly my cup of tea.

Refreshed, I bring my camera down to take a few pictures in the model room. Walking back and forth in the lobby area I notice three long tables that are packed with kids building models in a make-and-take. These tables would remain busy for the duration of the show – such a good thing to see. When I enter the main model room (3:30 PM - Thursday), I swear that already there are more models on display than there were in Phoenix on the final day of that show. What a difference it makes having the Nationals centrally-located – something to make note of. As usual, I look at model after model and find the quality beyond reproach. Truly inspiring.

Tim and I meet up with Alex Bigey (a French airline captain from Tahiti that we hang out with each year) and Warwick Wright (IPMS Vancouver) and together we get on a bus to the SAC Museum for the 'Night At the Museum' Tour. A half-hour later we are let loose and enter a beautiful museum that contains two large air-conditioned rooms full of relevant aircraft and displays. The size of these rooms is evident when, in one room, I stand on a

balcony and recognize the parts of a B-58, a B-47, a B-52, and a B-36. Tucked among these are an F-111, an A-26, an F-101, a B-25, and another half-dozen aircraft. But the real surprise was what we found in the second room. Nestled among a C-119 Boxcar, a C-47 Skytrain, and a C-97 Stratofreighter, is a real, honest to goodness British Avro Vulcan bomber. How cool is that! Like the Museum of Flight in Seattle, most of these aircraft are completely accessible. We can feel the surfaces with our hands, stand in the wheel wells, and even walk through the inside of several of the aircraft – a real treat. We get back to the hotel too late for convention stuff so we are off to the bar for beers, where we are joined by Djordje who has just arrived and has already hit the swimming pool!

Thankfully, everyone sleeps well and Friday morning we are up and at 'em, hitting the seminars at 8:30 for a Manufacturer's round-table discussion. The hour-long talk can be summarized as follows: China is winning, we are losing, and the future of modeling belongs to direct sales via the internet, where anyone can sell anything to anyone else. Undeterred, Tim heads off for the first of three Space-related seminars, Warwick shoots for the model room, and Djordje and I head for the vendor rooms for our first booth-by-booth canvas of the entire sales floor. I end up breaking at 1:00 PM for a seminar on 'Armor of the Pacific Theater', followed by a brief fly-by of the second of three Alclad seminars.

The Sprue Brothers' booth turns out to be the value destination of the show, selling a variety of kits and supplies for roughly 50% off (they would cut that price by another 20% on Saturday). I pick out two 1/35th Dragon armor kits for \$25 bucks each and a brand new 1/700th Dragon Essex Carrier for a cool \$20. Next door an outfit from Tennessee is selling the new AK Interactive weathering washes for \$6 apiece (about two bucks shy of mail-order prices when all is said and done). There are many vendors that stick to their prices (CMK and Verlinden come to mind), but

most of the stuff here is priced to move in a tough economy. And people were buying.

I move on and notice a big crowd surrounding a very small booth, manned by an even smaller (and extremely polite) Japanese businessman dressed in a black suit that is a few sizes too big for him. In broken English, he is having some difficulty describing his product, but the item that sat behind him on a shelf spoke a language we all understood perfectly – a 1/32nd scale AH-1 Skyraider. The built-up test-shot had folded wings and sat above a huge array of under-wing stores that will be sold separately (only two drop tanks come with the kit). The Skyraider should be available in October of this year. I was looking for more detail on the fuselage and wing-fold areas, and I was disappointed that not even a rudimentary set of weapons would be included in the kit. On the other hand, I welcome a new manufacturer into the fold (Zoukei-Mura) and I am thrilled that we will see this big boy on the show tables soon. The company's next release is a 1/32nd scale P-51D...but this one truly IS different. It appears to boast a full interior from nose to tail. Think the old Renewal Thomas Jefferson 'visible' submarine kit but in the shape of a P-51. The cool new part is that the outer skin is made up of numerous (separate) panels, allowing the modeler complete freedom over which interior areas to expose and which to cover up. A novel idea if they can pull it off.

Friday night we all went out to a locally-recommended steak house called Farmer Brown's, which has been in business for years. Tim and I attacked 14-oz slabs of butter-soft prime rib and the others dug into huge Rib Eye steaks, served with potatoes, green beans, salads and a few deep-fried Jalapeno Cream Cheese Poppers – and of course, the ever-present beer. In Nebraska, a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do! After dinner, we grabbed two six packs of Sam Adams at a store and came back to watch *Lord of the Rings* in our hotel room. Nerds.

Saturday morning we hit the model room in earnest since registration had closed the evening before. Armed with our cameras (and me with ibuprofen) we initiate the peculiar up-down-in-out dance common to modelers hovering around very fragile static models, and each other. Djordje says his camera totaled up exactly 1,000 pictures (mine around 400 and change) so I think we got a good representation between us (me a little more armor, him a little more aircraft) and Tim undoubtedly filling in the gaps with another 378 pictures of the more eclectic items and the SAC tour. Over all, the quality (and quantity!) was astonishing. I am glad I was not a judge.

Saturday afternoon was spent back in the Vendor room buying all the items we had earmarked during the previous three days, when the prices were higher and the vendors less desperate. It's a game we all understand and we parted happily, wishing each other the best until meeting again next year in Orlando.

The Saturday night banquet is usually the grand finale for a successful show, and this year was no exception. The food was excellent and the camaraderie ran deep. The Seattle IPMS Chapter sponsored two awards this year and we were finally able to cheer for our club along with the others. We learned that the 2013 convention will be held in Loveland, Colorado, and were given a taste of what the show will consist of next year in Orlando, Florida. This will include free transportation to and from the airport and Seattle-check-in to hotel-room delivery of baggage. Sweet!

As I sit here in the airport waiting for my flight home, I wonder how I will be able to afford to go next year. The show in Orlando means Disneyworld for my boys and the Florida sun means that Jackie will want to accompany us. One thing is for sure however; I know I will find a way and I will make it happen - the IPMS National Convention is truly THE must-see modeling event of the year!

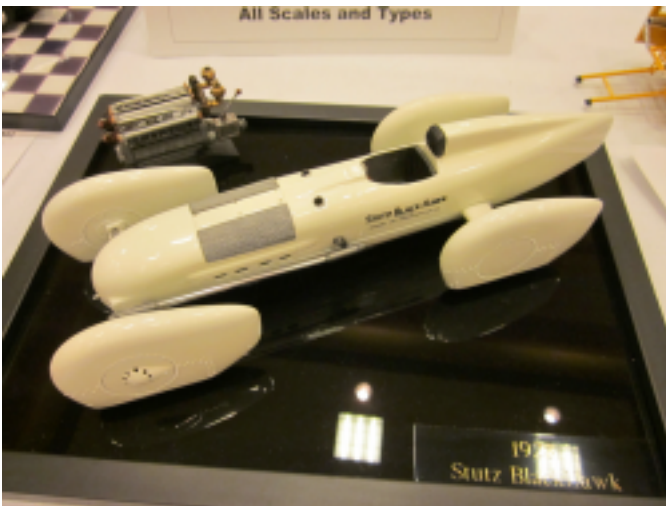
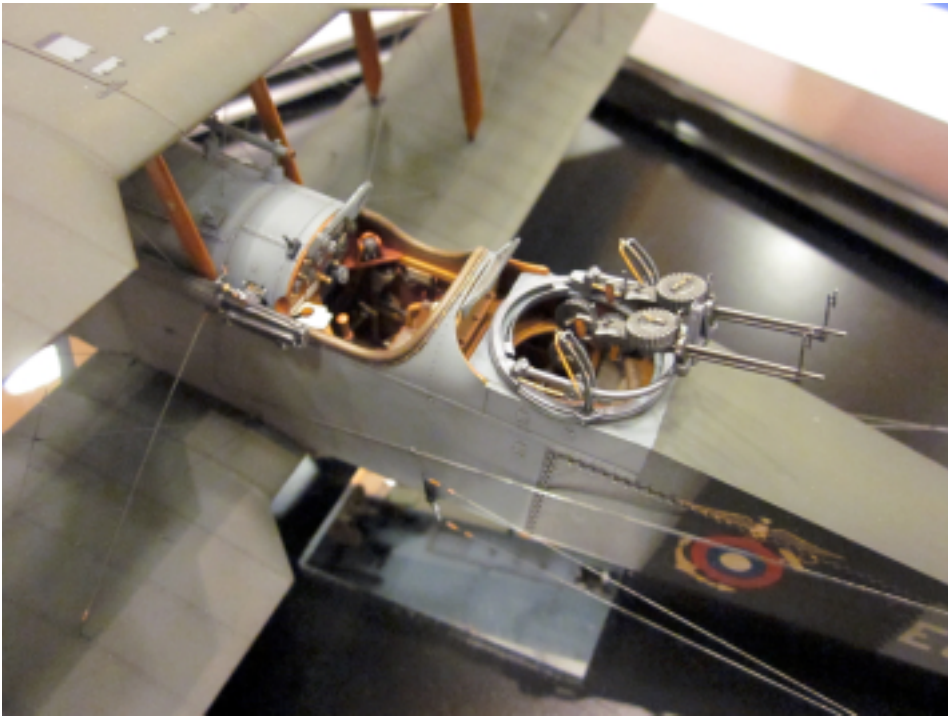
Show Metrics

Registered Modelers: 701
 Models on display: 2,476 models
 Walk-in visitors: 1,500+

Seattle/Vancouver Area Winners:

Djordje Nikolic	2nd	Bf 110C instrument panel
Djordje Nikolic	3rd	Sabre diorama
Roger Torgeson	2nd	U.S.S Lexington
Warwick Wright	1st	BOAC Mosquito
Warwick Wright	2nd	Westland Whirlwind FB.MK1
Warwick Wright	2nd	SU-27 Flanker B
Warwick Wright	3rd	F4D-1 Skyray





Hasegawa 1/12th Scale Repsol Honda RS250RW - "2007 WGP250"

by Andrew Bertschi

The Honda Motor Company has been directly involved in motorcycle racing since the firm's founding in the late 1940s. From a humble beginning at a small garage in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka prefecture, the company's first product to gain wide-spread sales success was a small, two-stroke motorcycle appropriately named the "Dream". Company founder Soichiro Honda always insisted on proving his products through the guise of competition and the RS250RW featured here is Honda's pinnacle in terms of two-stroke road racing motorcycles.

The kit represents a late 2007 season bike ridden by Repsol-Honda factory team riders Shuhei Aoyama and Julián Simón. Simón, #60, scored 123 points during 2007 and placed 9th overall in the 250cc World Grand Prix motorcycle racing Championship. Aoyama, #73, earned his first-ever pole position during the Motegi round in Japan and finished 12th. In 2007, the Repsol-Honda 250 team finished in 2nd place just behind Ducati.

This kit, which carries a skill level 3 rating, is derived from Hasegawa's recent 1/12th scale release of the Scot Racing Team 2009 Honda RS250RW (Hasegawa # BK1). To accurately model this version a number of parts have been newly tooled - these include the seat pads, rear swing arm, tank pad, and rear fender pieces. All of the 145 parts are cleanly molded on three large sprues; two in grey and one in white. There is also a separately bagged white sprue with the nose and engine fairing plus a small clear sprue with one wind-shield.

The box also contains a medium-sized bag with separately bagged rubber tires, several lengths and diameters of black and clear vinyl tubing, metal machine screws,



metal wire and a large metal coil spring for the rear suspension. No chrome or satin plated parts are included. As with other modern large scale motorcycle kits, the screws are used to hold the wheels on.

All of the parts have finely engraved detail, especially those for the engine, frame and radiator. Both halves of the frame also have realistically molded weld joints that should respond nicely to a dark wash to add depth and authenticity. The same applies to the intricate detail of the radiator moldings. While everything looks really good on the sprues, there are also a fair number of sink marks visible on some parts, but careful examination tells me that none of the areas they are located in will be visible on the completed model.

The instructions provided are very detailed and intricate. While the illustrations given are very good, determining the placement and final location of some parts is confusing so extra care should be given to making yourself very familiar with them before using any adhesives. The painting instructions are very comprehensive with paint callouts given using the Mr. Color numbering system. If you do not use or cannot get these paints where you live, a good reference source to convert the Mr. Color callouts to those of other paint systems can be found at http://www.ipmsstockholm.org/colorcharts/stuff_eng_colorcharts_gunze.htm

The decals, printed by Cartograph, are absolutely gorgeous and a tribute to both the printing and graphic artists "art". The fluorescent red and orange shades here are some of the nicest I have ever seen in decal form. The decals are also quite thin and mine were in perfect registry, with no extra carrier film where it was not needed. The sheet also includes several carbon fiber decals for certain parts like the muffler wrappings. Given the colorful nature of the bike's scheme, it is easy to say that applying the decals is probably the most challenging aspect of building it.

In scanning over the instructions and parts with their precision and high level of detail, it is quite obvious a lot of care went into the design, engineering and packaging of this kit. Given the advanced level everything is at here, in my opinion, similar care is required to do it building justice. While definitely not aimed at a novice, this is a welcome effort from Hasegawa and is highly recommended, especially if you are also interested in modern road racing motorcycles.

Though it is my own first large scale GP bike, I look forward to taking that challenge on.

My sincere thanks go to Hasegawa USA for the review sample.

Fw 190s and Me 262s

by Paul Ludwig

On August 6th the Flying Heritage Collection at Paine Field in Everett flew its Fw 190A-5 and Bf 109E on "Luftwaffe Day." It was the debut flight for the Fw 190A. I went to see it and hear that great sound of a piston engine, prop-type, tailwheel beauty. I love the sound of a radial piston engine. How seldom now, can a person talk about an aircraft that has a piston engine, a propeller, and a tailwheel; everything is tricycle gear and jet engines. At the published time of what was to have been a noon takeoff, thousands of us were introduced to several men, including the pilots, and we were given descriptions of the two aircraft; then at approximately 12:15 we were allowed to walk to be parallel to the runway behind a fence. I could not see the takeoff because of the crowd but the air show was spectacular. I walked to the far northern edge of the fenced-in enclosure and saw an Me 262 replica nosing from the hangar of the well-known "Me 262 Project" and a few days later I phoned and asked if I could pay a visit and the woman answering the phone said it was okay; to be there between 1 and 3 PM. I met Bob Hammer again. A few years ago, when the team in Texas dropped the idea to make 262s and sent everything to Bob Hammer, I worked with Bob and his staff as a part sorter when I knew nothing at all about a 262 or what part I was holding in my hands; but the job was simple: put all identical parts found in a variety of boxes, into a separate box together. When I was no longer of use, I stopped helping.

It was cloudy and I was told that the anticipated flight of the 262 was delayed; I had not known it was due to fly. I was thrilled to see it on the ground, close-up and it is pretty. Bob gave me a guided tour of the area; he told me that the 262 is going to a museum in Virginia Beach. He and his crew are building an Fw 190A-7 and a Japanese Zero for the Evergreen Museum. I was astounded to learn those facts and see the work in progress! The wing of the A-7 is nearing completion and it has the



main landing gear. The wing of the Zero is also near completion. Both will be built for static display. Bob told me they have a real Zero inside the trailer of a tractor trailer and it is due to be unloaded when flight testing of the 262 is finished. While I was there, two men were sanding wooden prop blades for the A-7 and that too was an amazing sight. Prop blades and compressor blades in turbine engines are sculptural works of art. In the far hangar is a 262 two-seater fuselage that may be built into an entire aircraft if someone comes forward

with money. Bob also told me that Paul Allen has a real Me 262 with the original engines and he wants to make it fly with those engines but an authority told him the only place it could fly is at Moses Lake, away from civilization. I do not know where Mr. Allen's 262 is.

When I was given the guided tour, Bob showed me a color profile of how their Fw 190A-7 will be painted. It is to be the

Continued on page 16



Model Building Skill Levels

by Mark Andrews, Rocky Mountain Model Masters

I have been looking at all the articles in many of the modeling publications over the last several years, and the technical levels required to do some of these projects is way too intense. Where I do admire and appreciate the work, I just don't see how the average modeler is going to be able to accomplish the projects. The newer kits that are being released have insanely high parts counts. This can be very intimidating to less-experienced builders. And it is the ultra-advanced modelers that are scaring the beginners away. They see the ultra-detailed and electronics-added

models and they just think they will never get to that level so they give up.

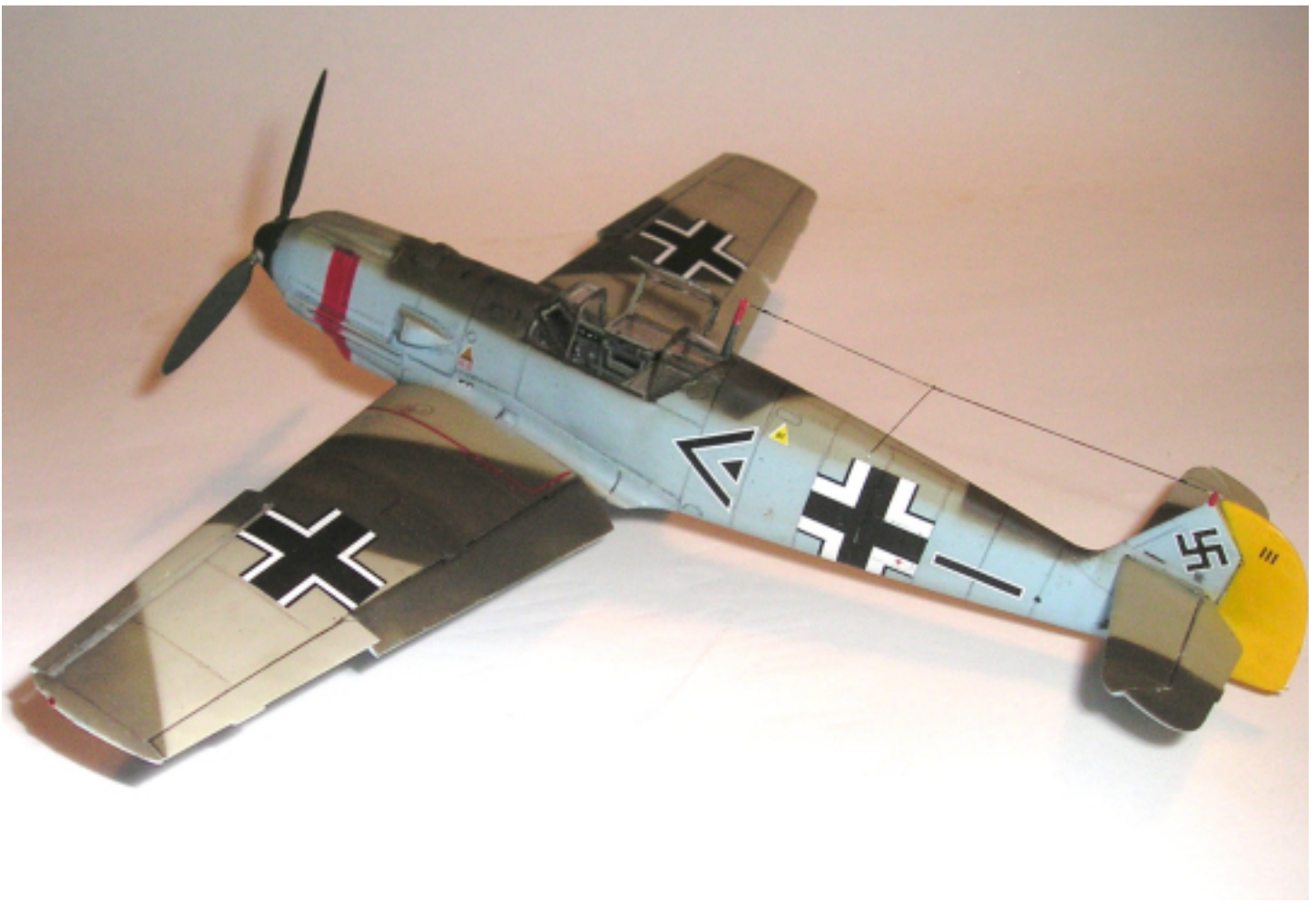
There has been a small return to basic techniques in *Fine Scale Modeler* Magazine and other magazines over the last couple of years, but I think it may be too little too late. And the creation of the photo-etch and resin parts has helped some by allowing less experienced builders add some high level of details. But then this has scared off many modelers because now they think they need to spend \$500 in parts for a \$30 kit to compete in shows. Unfortunately this has been becoming the trend over the last several years. Out of the box and minor conversions don't stand a chance against a kit that has had 75% of the parts replaced with aftermarket.

Model building is in the middle of a huge revolution. But it is starting to side with the elitist level of builders. What happened to the 'fun' aspect? We need to get back to the basics of model building before we don't have any younger generations following in our footsteps. I am sure I will make some hardcore builders unhappy with my comments, but I think it is about time that this was said.

[Thanks to John DeRosia for passing along Mark's comments. – ED]

Airfix 1/48th Scale Bf 109E

Hal Marshman Jr wrote about his build of this kit in last month's issue. Here is his finished model.



***Vulcan's Hammer: V-Force
Projects and Weapons Since
1945,***
by **Chris Gibson**

reviewed by **Chris Banyai-Riepl**



At the beginning of 1945, the RAF's Bomber Command was one of the most potent strategic forces in the world. Its power diminished overnight, though, with the explosions of American nuclear bombs over Japan, and from that point on, Bomber Command sought new systems to handle this potent weapon. What developed was the V-Force, a triad of jet bombers designed to carry the British arsenal of nuclear weaponry. While the Valiant, Vulcan, and Victor bomber aircraft are well known, less attention has been given to the support systems, weaponry, and follow-on designs that came from the evolution of the United Kingdom as a nuclear power.

This book from Hikoki Publications examines these fascinating sidelines to the V-Force. The book begins by covering some of the alternatives to the V-Force aircraft. These include missiles such as the

Martin Matador and Northrop Snark, as well as the Minimum Conventional Bomber and the Crewless Expendable Bomber. The latter, known as Blue Moon, had several different iterations that were examined. Also covered are the various forms of guidance systems that were to be employed by these vehicles.



Another aspect of development was moving the subsonic V-Force into supersonic range with a new family of bombers. These designs were quite varied and interesting, including designs from Avro, Bristol, and Vickers. The advent of supersonic flight and advances in technology also resulted in designs aimed at pathfinding, reconnaissance, and decoys. The section detailing these advances is quite thorough and covers a great deal of information.

Following the delivery systems, the book then turns towards the weapons them-

selves. A chapter on gravity bombs describes the problems with free-fall weapons and high-speed jet aircraft, as well as the adaptation of nuclear bombs to smaller aircraft, such as the Buccaneer and the TSR.2. With gravity weaponry rapidly becoming obsolete, the book then turns towards stand-off weapons, such as Blue Steel and Skybolt. Finally, the book examines hypersonic and space as further extensions of the V-Force.

Overall, this book makes for a very fascinating addition to any book detailing the Valiant, Victor, or Vulcan bombers. Knowing what went on behind the scenes helps put the evolution of the UK's nuclear deterrent force in perspective. My thanks to Specialty Press for the review copy.

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Trumpeter 1/35th Scale Soviet 152mm Howitzer M1937 ML-20

by Eric Christianson

The M1937 (ML-20) was a towed howitzer in service with the Soviet Army before the start of World War II. The M1937 was designed to replace the M1910/34 which was itself an improvement over the M1910 siege gun developed before World War I. The ML-20 was capable of firing three to four rounds per minute with an experienced crew and was used extensively during the war.



Trumpeter's M1937 Howitzer comes in a small, sturdy box containing ten separately bagged trees of beige plastic parts. The parts are crisp and flash-free, and effort has been made to restrict the few ejector pin marks to areas that are not visible on the finished model. The plastic is very soft and sands easily.

Also included are two sheets of photo-etch and an aluminum barrel. The barrel lacks the slotted muzzle-brake however – a two-piece, plastic muzzle brake is included that attaches to the end.

The 12-page instruction booklet is well illustrated and easy to follow. A separate, glossy five-view color Painting and Marking Guide is included and provides a standard color scheme of Russian Armor Green, showing the gun in its towed configuration. A second Trumpeter color promo-sheet includes break-out images of the various features of the kit. Two images



show what would appear to be a solid, one piece muzzle brake, although the one provided in the kit is in two halves.

There are many delicate parts in this kit that have other parts attached to them. In order to get everything lined up and installed right, I had to attach a few parts, wait overnight for the glue to dry rock-solid, and then attach a few more parts, etc., etc., which made for a relatively lengthy build. I could have used super-glue, but the fit of many of these parts suffered from what I call Trumpeter's 'wobble-fit' – meaning the parts generally fit, but not securely. There is no positive, tactile response when attaching parts; many of them lack any defined attachment points and must be nursed along as they dry in order for them to line up right. Under such conditions, I find super-glue too unforgiving.

You will need to decide early on whether to build your howitzer in its towed configuration or as a static emplacement. I chose the build the gun in its travel mode.

Fortunately, Trumpeter chose to include plastic tires for their 152mm howitzer wheels and limber instead of rubber tires. Furthermore, the kit's tires are molded separately from the wheels, so painting is a

breeze. Bravo! I prepared the tires and slid them on without glue so they could be primed with the rest of the model but painted separately.

Step 7. Like similar towed-artillery kits, Trumpeter has chosen to vaguely attach the main gun shield, relying on very narrow photo-etch parts to secure it on each side. These PE parts are articulated and must be bent perfectly, first in half down the middle, and then at three different angles each. There are no other (plastic-to-plastic) attachment points for the main shield. After several unsuccessful attempts, I merely put some thick super glue across the top of the main barrel and manhandled the shield into place. Once I lined it up I touched it with accelerator and then put several drops of Testors liquid cement across the seams for additional strength. I discarded the PE. If I could start over I would attach the shield's plastic parts to the main gun housing as I did, let it dry thoroughly, and then carefully bend and attach the PE parts after the fact.

The tool box (parts A2 and A45) do not have any attachment points behind the shield, and it does not lie flat against the shield – it must be carefully attached using glue along its thin back edges.



Step 8. The muzzle brake is made of two plastic halves, and, unfortunately, is attached to the sprue in such a way that an ugly seam is exposed along the top of the brake, made worse by the sprue attachment points on each side. Instead of trying to clean up this eye-magnet, I substituted it with the one-piece plastic muzzle brake from the Tamiya ISU-152 kit for which I had purchased an after-market barrel and brake.

Parts C16, C17, and C15 make up what I would consider the Achilles heel of the kit. Together they form a U-shaped housing into which the main gun assembly slides forward and backward. Unfortunately, these three pieces do not have any positive attachment points; the alignment of this crucial assembly relies on a long, thin trough along each side of the three pieces. This design approach requires that the three pieces be glued solid enough to bear the stress of many other attached parts, yet at the same time, flexible enough to adjust the alignment as other parts are attached. I went back and forth with this conundrum and never really got the alignment correct. Later on, when the main gun was fitted to the gun housing, I had to break parts and glue them slightly off center to gain a semblance of overall alignment.

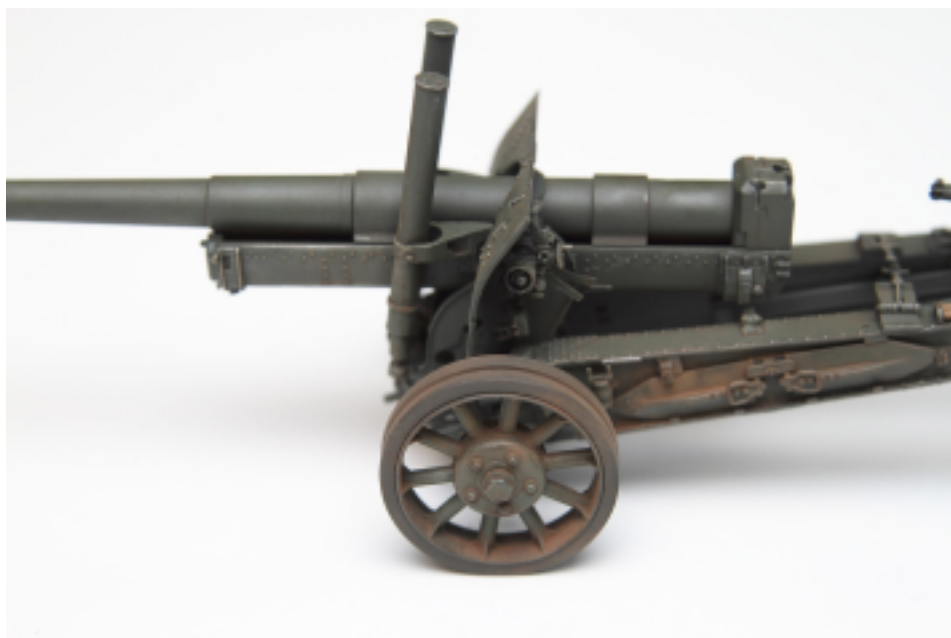
Step 11. Since I chose to build the model in its travel mode, I needed to assemble and attach the eight-piece manual handle and draw bar (which appears to be absent in its static, 'combat' mode). Unfortunately, this was fraught with fit problems and the two stanchions (Parts D35) that hold the draw bar up are so thin that they both snapped when being removed from the sprue (these each had two attachment points). Furthermore, the design of the entire assembly requires that in order to

get the correct angle of the draw bar right, very small and delicate parts on both ends must be glued and fussed with at the same time – a common theme with this kit.

I solved the problem by gluing the two (bottom halves of the) D35 parts to the main howitzer trails and let them dry, followed by the top halves. Once these were dry, I assembled the main bar and its two handles, addressing fit problems regarding the attachment points. Once this was dry, I attached the bar to the trails and simply dropped it down on the (now somewhat sturdier) D35 parts and called it a day.

Note – the illustrations for this step show the main gun in its fully extended position – which would not be the case if it is built in travel mode. The color Painting and Marking Guide shows the position of the main gun in its correct (traveling) configuration.

Once you finish the sub-assemblies and have accounted for all the parts, the kit comes together pretty quickly, although there are fit problems with each main assembly. I had to enlarge receiving holes or remove posts altogether to make things fit. That said - with a little effort, I think the final result looks pretty good and complex



– which is the look I am always after with artillery pieces.

I assembled the entire model before painting. With so much Testors glue on the model I started with an even primer coat of Gunze Mr. Surfacer 1200. I followed this with a base coat of Tamiya NATO Black. Both of these layers are very thin and (I feel) did not detract from the look of all the delicate parts making up the gun.

After removing the tires, I started with an overall coat of Model Master Russian Armor Green. Once dry, I followed this with a post-shading coat of Model Master Topside Green, applied to the exposed flat surfaces, leaving the darker color to mix with the background black in the shaded areas.

I then painted the tires Model Master US Army Helo Drab, and attached them to the wheels. Next, I shot the whole thing with a coat of Future to prepare the surface for a wash and let everything set for three days. Once dry, I applied a pin wash of Windsor Newton Raw Umber thinned with Mona Lisa thinner. Next, I dry-brushed the exposed edges with Model Master Afrika DunkelGrau, followed by a pass with a Prismacolor silver pencil here and there to bring out a metallic glint. Finally I dusted the lower portion of the howitzer with a mix of MIG Black, Russian Earth, and Old Rust pigments.

The build took me about eleven hours to complete, most of the time spent on assembly.

The number of small parts and complexity of the assembly made building this kit a challenge. The attachment points for many of the parts in the kit could have been better-designed. Many such points were simply non-existent or would not fit. Also, I would like to have had a one-piece muzzle brake, or at least a muzzle brake with better engineered sprue attachment points. The Soviet 152mm gun's slotted muzzle brake is the 'sexy' part of the whole artillery piece, and all eyes will be attracted to that part like they are to the cockpit of an aircraft. It must be flawless.

On the positive side, however, the completed kit conveys the rugged, rivet-smothered look of a high-caliber Soviet field howitzer and I think it will look great behind a Voroshilovets tractor or other prime mover.

I would recommend this kit only to modelers experienced in solving problems. That said, however, the kit builds into a very nice and unique representation. I'd like to thank Stevens International for providing the review sample, and Internet Modeler for giving me the opportunity to build the kit.





Oregon Historical Modelers Society (OHMS)

and the

Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum



PRESENT THE



IPMS Region 7 Convention Model Show and Contest 2011

Saturday, September 17, 2011

Theme: 100 Years of Naval Aviation

- IPMS Region 7 Regional Convention
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- Door Prizes, Kit Raffle, and food available
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Visit the show web site at <http://www.ipms-portland.org/show-main.htm>

Located just east of McMinnville, Oregon along Highway 18
500 NE Michael King Smith Way
McMinnville, OR 97128

Fw 190s and Me 262s

from page 9

A-7 flown by Major Heinz Bar of Stab II./ JG 1 at Stormende, Germany in April, 1945. It is Red 13, with a circular marking of a red thunderbird set in a white diamond inside a black circle surrounded by a white or yellow circular line. The rudder is white and there is a wreath insignia on the rudder depicting 200 victories.



Upcoming Shows

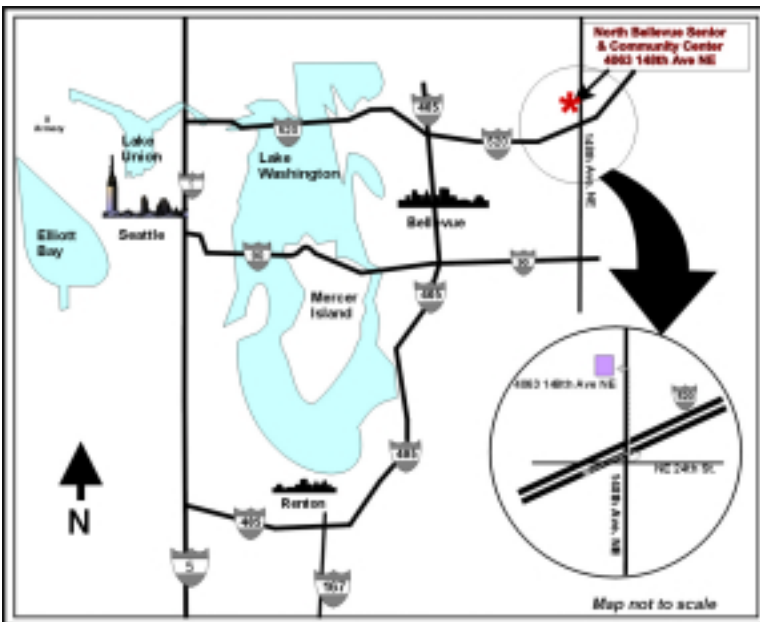
Here are the known shows and events for the rest of 2011:

- 9/17 McMinnville OHMS (see page 15)
- 9/24 Lynnwood Galaxy Sci-Fan
- 9/25 Milpitas, CA Tri-City Classic VII
- ???????? Silvana 5th Annual
- 10/1 Moscow ID Bring out Good Stuff
- 10/8 Burnaby IPMS Vancouver

Thanks to Chellie Lynn.

Meeting Reminder

September 10



**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.