Seattle Chapter News

Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
August 2012

PREZNOTES

I am sorry that your Vice President and your President won't be at this month's August meeting. As I type this PrezNotes column there is less than 24 hours prior to my flight to Orlando, where Eric and I will be attending the IPMS National Convention and Model Show, together with three or four other chapter members. I am really looking forward to attending the Orlando gathering, as it will allow me to partake in a few important (for me anyway) activities, many of which I miss out on when I participate in our own Spring Show. First among these is a relaxing model show. When you are a member of the organizing committee that runs your own model show, relaxation is the last thing you experience. You are lucky if you get a few moments to rush around the model contest tables, taking in as many of the great looking models as you can in a very tight timeframe. In most years following the Spring Show, people will say "did you see that fantastic so and so model", and I will say, "really, there was one of those at our show?". I will have missed it in my rush around the model table circuit.

Another activity I really enjoy at other peoples' shows is talking to the modelers who built and finished my favorite models displayed. I pick up new finishing techniques, new construction techniques, or just enjoy the enthusiasm that comes from talking to a fellow modeler about their model. At the Nationals, a four day event, there is plenty of time to wander around the model tables (and of course the vendor tables), schmoozing with various folks, old friends, and hopefully some new acquaintances. You can even take the time for a leisurely meal, or a drink at the bar, and resume the conversations you were having while looking at the models!

Seminars. We have these at our Spring Show, and people who have attended them say they are very informative. I wouldn't know, as whenever I think of attending one at the Spring Show, I always seem to be doing something else when the time for the seminar I want to attend comes around. With four days at the Nationals, I plan on sitting in on a bunch of them.

We have two big shows in our region coming up shortly, one on September 15 in McMinnville, Oregon hosted by the Oregon Historical Modelers Society at the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum.

The other is the IPMS Vancouver (Canada) show on October 6 at the Bonsor Recreation Center in Burnaby, BC.

This year both are on non-conflicting weekends when it comes to our monthly Chapter meeting, and I encourage you to head south, or north (or BOTH!) to take in these fun, friendly shows. See you at the September meeting!

Cheers,

Andrew

In This Issue

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Public Disclaimers, Information, and Appeals for Help

This is the official publication of the Seattle Chapter, IPMS-USA. As such, it serves as the voice for our Chapter, and depends largely upon the generous contributions of our members for articles, comments, club news, and anything else involving plastic scale modeling and associated subjects. Our meetings are generally held on the second Saturday of each month, (see below for actual meeting dates), at the **North Bellevue Community/Senior Center, 4063-148th Ave NE**, in Bellevue. See the back page for a map. Our meetings begin at 10:00 AM, except as noted, and usually last for two to three hours. Our meetings are very informal, and are open to any interested modeler, regardless of interests. Modelers are encouraged to bring their models to the meetings. Subscriptions to the newsletter are included with the Chapter dues. Dues are $25 a year for regular mail delivery of the newsletter, and $15 for e-mail delivery, and may be paid to Spencer Tom, our Treasurer. (See address above). We also highly recommend our members join and support IPMS-USA, the national organization. See below for form. Any of the members listed above will gladly assist you with further information about the Chapter or Society.

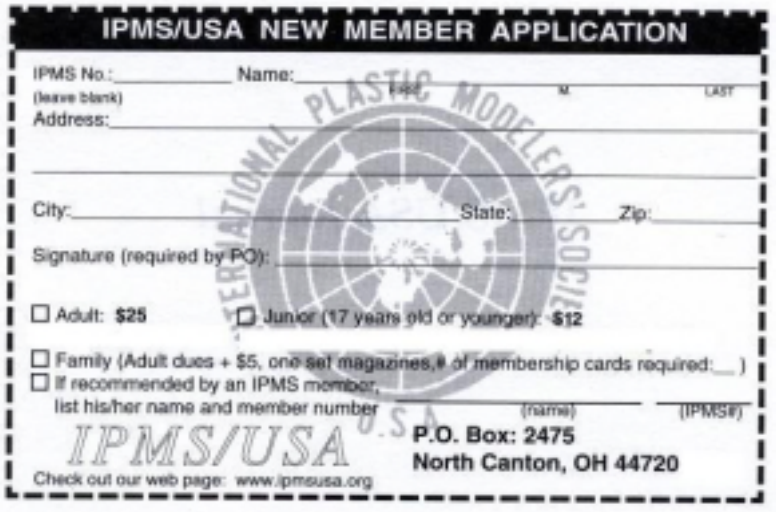
The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Chapter or IPMS-USA. You are encouraged to submit any material for this newsletter to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise. The newsletter is currently being edited using a PC, and PageMaker 6.5. Any Word, 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 2012 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 accessable place.

August 11
September 8
October 13
November 10



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Hasegawa 1/12th Scale Honda RS250RW 2009 WGP 250 Racing Champion

by Jon Fincher

Back in March 2011, I had the opportunity to do a First Look at Hasegawa's RS250RW 2009 WGP 250 Racing Champion kit, right here in this magazine. Now, many months later, what started as a fun build of a cool looking kit slowly turned to concern, then outright pain, then finally frustrated resignation. Only now can I finally tell the true story of the magnificent burning agony of building this kit.

Our story begins, as it were, at the beginning...

As with most auto and bike kits, assembly begins with the engine. Since motorcycle engines are almost always exposed for viewing, taking time to detail them properly almost always pays off. In order to do that, you'll need to break out the metallic paints.

The painting instructions for this kit are given in GSI Creos and Mr. Color - since I'd be referring to them a lot during the build, I wrote them on a separate piece of paper to use while building. There are a lot of places where mixes of colors are called for - half silver and half steel, half silver and half gold (I used brass instead), 80% silver and 20% olive drab (yes, metallic and OD, really). Be ready to do some brush painting with your metallizers - it's not as difficult as it sounds. I used Model Master paints, and despite the warning, you can brush paint them if you work quickly, put lots of paint on the brush, and don't try to cover large areas.

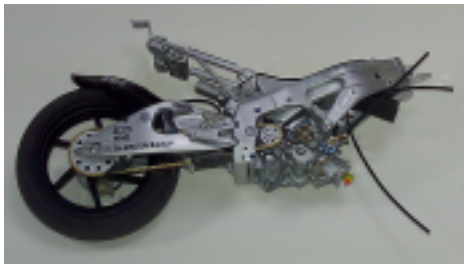
There are some oddities with the engine build. Two engine halves come together well, but there is a third piece which closes up the bottom of the engine as well that can be tricky to get into place. There are some fiddly bits that are best left for the very end, such as spark plugs and throttle linkages. However, once everything's cleaned up, painted, washed and dry-brushed, the result is a beautiful looking engine.

As the build progress, you wind up coming back to the engine to add new fiddly parts - spark plug wires (which are made from provided black vinyl tubing, but have to be painted blue), an intake manifold (which has to connect with an inlet on the rear body panel much later), and exhaust system are just a few of the items that come later.

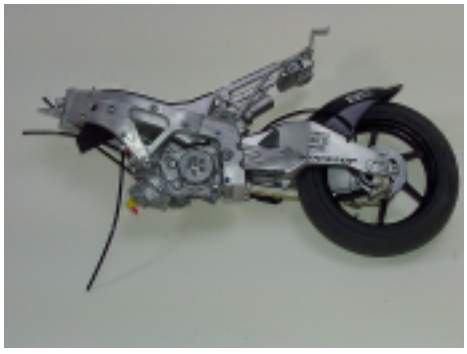
Throughout the engine build, you are instructed to add hoses and other soft lines - the kit comes with a long length of vinyl tubing for this, and the instructions provide length indicators to allow you to cut them appropriately. My advice is to cut them longer than specified - there is plenty of tubing for you to add a centimeter or more to every cut and still not run out. Doing this will prevent problems later (remember the "concern" mentioned above?)...

One note on the exhaust system - the mufflers on this bike are Kevlar (which is similar to carbon fiber, but is a yellow weave rather than black), and represented by decals. When I put them on, they wrinkled, even with setting solution. I wound up sanding them down and replacing them with Scale Motorsports Kevlar decal material in a 1/12th scale pattern. Comparing this to the kit decals, I think the kit patterns are 1/24th, as the weave on the Scale Motorsports decals is much bigger.

The chassis comes together in two halves, with some smaller bits in between. I recommend assembling the whole thing (except for the under-seat shock absorber) and painting it as one piece - the flat black shields and pads can be picked out with a brush easily later.



The engine gets inserted into the chassis from underneath, and is held in with four small bolts. Note these aren't screws, but injected pieces which need to be removed from the sprue and cleaned up. Hasegawa could have done a better job here with engineering, as the bolt heads are where the sprue attachment point is. In any case, my suggestion is to not paint them right away - put a drop of glue in the hole, insert the bolt, and let it set. You can hit it with paint (clear blue to simulate an anodized bolt) later. The rest of the chassis assembly comes together easily



One thing I noted during the initial assessment was that the lack of chrome on the chassis pieces was a good thing, as it

allowed the builder to control the sheen and color of the part. However, in practice, this is less than desirable, as the continual handling of the parts resulted in the metallizer rubbing off in key places. Touching this up was difficult to do, so I regretfully have to reverse my opinion on this aspect of the kit (there's more of that "concern").

The wheels are billet five-spoke racing wheels, painted black with a simple silver nipple. The "flash" comes from the brake discs, which are, as with the engine, an exercise in metallic detail painting. Shades of silver and gold highlight the drilled-out brake discs. Rubber tires stretch easily over the rims to complete the look - sanding the tires down to remove the mold line will also help give them the appearance of having been on the road. These wheels and tires are assembled into a rear swing arm assembly, and a front fork assembly - make sure the wheels are pointing in the right direction when you insert them, as the spokes are directional. There are some decals on the wheels you should get now while they're off the bike.

The rear swing arm goes together well. The two halves require paint and decals - some nice carbon fiber decals are provided, although the placement of top and bottom panels seems a bit odd. Fiddly bits like a rear brake caliber and brake line are added before the rear tire and chain are inserted - everything is held together with a screw through the rear tire. The chain is well engineered with a split near the front sprocket - it can be inserted into the gap in the swing arm with no problems, and glued down once the swing arm is in place.

The front forks were a little trickier for me. There's a part in step 12 of the instructions that is glued on after the forks are assembled, although it's painted the same color as the forks. In order to save time, I glued this part in place before painting and assembly - however, by doing so, I was unable to slide the front mud guard over the forks during assembly. As I couldn't remove it cleanly, I wound up filing the part down. There's nothing that attaches to it, so the effect is detail loss, but this was the start of an itch that swelled into the "pain" mentioned earlier.

Both the rear swing arm and front forks are attached to the main chassis with screws. Be careful when attaching the front forks this way - if the glue on the top cross piece of the triple tree is not set, there is the tendency to push it off as the screw tries to set in the bottom piece. I wound up using CA on the top cross piece, and using a bit of force to hold in place as the screw seated itself. There is a small cap that covers the screw head - like the engine bolts, this is an injected piece with the attachment point on the exposed edge. And as with the engine bolts, glue it in place first, then paint it.

After the front forks are attached, you can put the bike on the stand and then get busy with the fiddly bits - stand-offs for the body work, foot pegs and pedals, hand grips, and the instrument panel cluster. And here's where cutting the hoses long comes in handy - step 14 instructs you to connect the RCV cables (attached to the engine in step 4) to a meter on the instrument panel. Mine would not stretch to fit that far - they each needed about five more millimeters to make the connection. Cutting the hoses long would have allowed me to connect them properly, rather than just stuffing them into the front fairing and hoping the judges miss it...

This kit comes with two sets of body panels - one clear to show off all the intricate body work, and one opaque to allow the body paint and decals to shine. I opted to build this with the body painted and decaled, which presented its own set of challenges - here's where my earlier

concern and pain grew and flourished into a full-fledged migraine of issues.

To summarize these challenges, let's focus on the front fender - it's a three color scheme, with silver on the outer edges, white in the middle, and a black stripe separating them. On other kits I've done, this would be done with either a black and silver decal for the outer edge, or better, a black and white decal for the center. This allows you to paint the fender one color, and let the decal edges define the borders between colors. Hasegawa, however, went with a simple black decal for the separator, relying on the builder to find the line between the silver and white. This is much trickier, as you don't really know where the decal is going to lie until it's on the part.

My first try at getting this right was fairly straightforward - I photocopied the decal sheet, then cut out the black stripes and laid them down on the fender using tape. This gave me the proper layout, which I used to find the boundary between the white and silver. Throughout the build, I used Tamiya tape, and some 1mm pin striping tape, to locate edges and mask everything, which seemed work well - some light sanding and a few coats of Future later, I had a nice looking front fender.

However, this feeling of accomplishment was not to last, and the front fender was the last piece of bodywork I touched which came out well. The issue of decals and paint edges was a recurring theme throughout the finish of the body work, and my handling of them seemed to get worse as the build progressed. Apparently, throughout this build, I regressed from a competent modeler who can execute a decent finish to a rank amateur who can't tell the difference between primer and clear-coat. For the record, here's the sordid tale:

On the seat pan, the line between silver and black rides the lip around the rear portion, which was tough to mask. The white portion was a decal that sat over top of it, which meant trying to keep the black gap between the white decal and painted silver underneath steady. For this, I wound up using some black pinstripe decal, which needed a lot of work and setting solution to curve properly. Even then, I had paint issues that needed touching up (which are visible in the pictures).

A single decal spans the belly pan and the front fairing (seen in light blue in the pictures). This required painting both body panels silver, attaching them to each other temporarily, placing the decal, then cutting it. However, beneath this decal the belly pan is black, following the bottom edge of the decal. I tried using my paper cutout idea from the front fender to mask this demarcation, but the line was off by half a degree, which meant I needed to remask that line and repaint. Knowing I couldn't mask over the decal directly, I clear coated it with three coats of Future and let it cure a week before masking. And here is where the pain truly began to become a separate entity identifiable to science.

In the left hand view, you can see where bottom half of the decal is torn - the other half, complete with three coats of Future, is attached to the tape I used to mask off the black. Apparently, the Future stuck to the decal much better than the decal stuck to the silver paint. But my tale ends not here, good reader...

The front fairing has a few places where decals and paint meet that can only be found by applying the decals first. The Scot logo band is white with a black bottom stripe, but black paint above it. Again, on the left side, the tape claimed part of the Scot decal with its Future topcoat "sealer" as I tried to paint the black area.

Above the black area is a white area which also has to be painted - you can see the issues I had with paint bleed through that I failed to properly correct. In my defense, by this time of the project, the pain of decal loss and Future failure had eased into a general feeling of frustration - above all else, I wanted it to be done. I was not going to spend any more time fighting the finish on this model than I had to, so the bleed through stayed. But even as I resigned myself to a poor finish, the finish had not yet resigned itself to leaving me alone...

The last bits to be done were the silver decals on the front, which went on top of

the white paint and decided to wrinkle badly when hit with Solvaset. This gave my frustrated resignation that last little oomph it needed to be born new and whole to the world.

Above the silver decals are areas to be painted black. By this time, I had lost all confidence in my Tamiya tape, my multiple coats of Future, and my ability to execute a decent finish, so I decided to brush paint the black areas. This is where my resignation took on its own life and began feeding on my common sense - I applied the paint too soon, as the Future under it was still curing, and it cracked. After waiting a week for everything to cure, I applied more paint to cover the cracks, Future'd the devil out of it, sanded to get rid of the surface cracks, and repeated this until I was numb.

I told friends and club members as I was building this, that this was 90% of a Tamiya motorcycle kit - if you've ever built a Tamiya MC kit, you'll understand as you take on this one.

Unfortunately, I was wrong - it's less than 90%. The plastic engineering is wonderful in places (rear chain, engine and chassis detail), but odd in others (engine bolts, intake). The body colors are stunning, but very difficult to pull off due to the poor paint and decal engineering. The final effect is great, but you really have to work for it, and work a lot harder than you would for a Tamiya bike kit.

While definitely a buildable kit, and a very nice looking one, it's not for everyone. In short, if you don't like doing intricate body painting and decaling, I would find another kit.

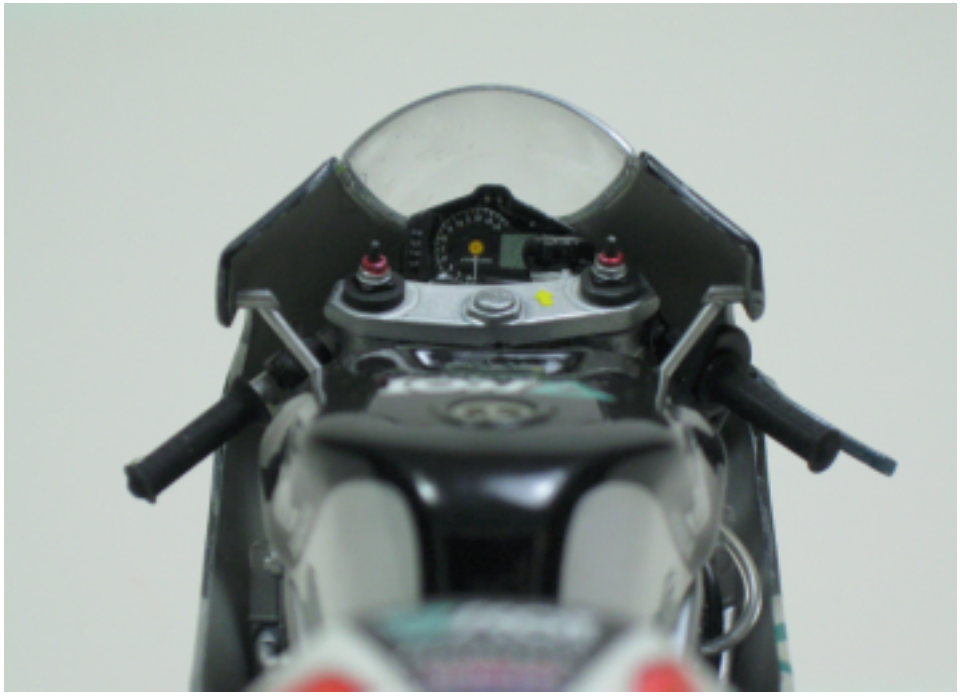
On the finish of this kit, I rate myself as a two (I'd be a one, but the front fender turned out OK). There are a lot of things I'd do differently if I had this to do over again:

Don't use Future - I'd use lacquer clears. My color coats were all lacquers, but using Future meant I could only touch up with acrylics.

Clear coat the silver areas before applying decals so they'd have something better to which to bond.
Apply more metallizer to the chassis, clear coat it, and handle it less.
Cut all the hoses longer than necessary.
Mask with Bare-Metal foil to get crisp edges.

Use Micro-Sol and Micro-Set rather than Solvaset on the decals.
When finished, conveniently "misplace" the first model.
Or I could just move on to another model...

My thanks to Hasegawa USA for the review kit.



Dragon 1/200th Scale Avro Vulcan B.2 "Ascension Island 1982"

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

The Avro Vulcan was the last of the British V-Bombers, and its distinctive appearance made it quite popular at air shows. While designed to deliver nuclear weapons, its entry into combat actually involved conventional stores. When Argentina decided to take the Falkland Islands in 1982, part of the British response was to sortie Vulcan bombers out of Ascension Island to crater the runway at Port Stanley and to use AGM-45 Shrike missiles against radar targets. While the actual damage done was minimal, the psychological effect was immense, and the Vulcan missions forced the Argentine military to reposition forces to counter the threat.

This is the second release of the Cyber-Hobby 1/200th scale Avro Vulcan, and this time around it's set up for a Falkland Islands bird. Molded in light gray plastic, the kit also comes with a small sprue of clear parts, optional parts for an earlier variant (marked not for use), and interesting decals for two aircraft options.

The construction of the kit is somewhat interesting, as the entire aircraft is split into an upper half and a lower half. This makes sense, as it is in essence just a big wing. There is a separate insert for the bomb bay, which allows for alternate versions (the other option has the cutout for the Blue Steel standoff missile, which is provided in the kit as an option marked not for use). The leading edge and trailing edge are incorporated into the upper wing half, which puts the seams for filling on the underside of the model. This helps in the finishing of the kit, as there are no curves or sharp edges to deal with in sanding the seams.

The underside of the kit comes with the option of retracted or extended landing gear, with the raised gear option providing the gear doors as a single piece inserted into the wheel well opening. This is another piece of nice engineering, as it will make it much simpler in building the kit gear up. For the gear down option, the landing gear is nicely detailed and features separate wheels. While remaining on the underside, this kit comes with the stores used for the Black Buck missions, (AGM-45 Shrikes under one wing, and an ECM pod under the other). With the gluing together of the air intake pieces, the main fuselage/wing assembly can be put together.

With the main assembly together, the rest of the build is very simple. There are two choices of vertical fins, again to cover different variants. The cockpit is covered with a clear canopy, while the refueling probe is separate. The canopy is small, but covers the whole 'bubble', which is nice. However, masking it off will be a bit of a challenge. There are also various antenna bits to add around the nose. With all that in place, all that's left is to paint this one up.

The painting options cover the two styles of camouflage worn by Vulcans in the 1980s. The first option is an aircraft from 27 Squadron and features a wraparound camouflage consisting of green and gray. The second option is from 44 Squadron and has the green and gray upper surface camouflage, with extra dark sea gray undersurfaces. The decals are nicely printed and provide national markings as well as the individual aircraft and squadron markings. A handful of stencil decals are also provided.

For such an iconic aircraft, it's surprising that there are not more models of the Avro Vulcan. This is the only 1/200th scale kit that I know of, and while I would have liked to have seen it a bit larger in 1/144th scale (to fit in with the big range of other British aircraft available in that scale), this is still a nice little model that will build up into a great replica of the Vulcan. My thanks to Dragon Models USA for the review sample.

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

Hurricane Theater - And Digression

by Scott Kruize

The Battle of Britain: the Real Story

Last Monday night, Channel 9 PBS in Seattle ran this special, and of course I had to watch it. I got SO much out of it that I offer here a helpful subtitle: "Yet Another Hymn to the Great and Glorious Spitfire!"

The host was personable enough, and talked about how much he'd wanted to do this special, taking a 'new' look at the Battle, which he'd grown up hearing all about. But now different perspectives could be offered, based on knowledge and understanding not available at the time. For instance, it's been recently declassified that all German aircrew shot down then were taken to a particular facility, for a while, before being sent off to military prison camps. The place was bugged by British military intelligence, and everything the German crewmen said to each other was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.

Another example: consideration of just how effective attacks on the British fighter fields could have been. Apparently, German military 'intelligence' would simply red-X off the map any such field that the bomber crews reported they'd successfully attacked. How's that again? Those fields were all grass. A bomb can punch a hole through the turf and blast a big chunk of dirt into the air, and it must be really annoying to fly home to your base and find there's a bunch of such holes. But filling them up again is hardly high-tech, or even particularly time-consuming. Evidently, Manston was the only Fighter Command base put out of commission for more than a day.

All right, might as well get to why I'm bothering to comment, at all, on this television program in my semi-regular column. One more time, fans, yet another report about the Battle of Britain turns out to scarcely mention the Hurricane. Most of the overly-familiar film footage was of Spitfires flying around glamorously. The host openly admitted how much the sight of its beautiful lines excited him - and he was thrilled to get to stand next to ONE of the two main exhibits in the 'Spitfire and Hurricane Museum' he visited.

This 'Real Story' contained other fairly silly things. Consider the host's big point of coming down on the side of German armament technology as being far superior to that of the British. He held up a rifle caliber bullet between two fingers, then dramatically contrasted it with a handful of the enormous bulk and weight of a 20 mm cannon shell. He claimed that while the British machine gun batteries had only 15 seconds worth of firing, the German firepower was almost a minute's worth. This gave the impression, of course, that the Messerschmitt 109 could lay down a barrage of 20mm cannon fire that long. Nonsense!

"Engineering is compromise." There is no such thing as a system that is totally superior, in every way, to another system designed for the same purpose. The British aerial armament designers weren't foolish; the German weren't brilliant. Their different approaches had both advantages and disadvantages…

The wing-mounted cannons of the 109 were drum-fed, each gun having 60 rounds, or roughly 15 seconds' firing time: the same time quoted for the British fighters. All the rest of that full-minute of 'overwhelming' firepower would have been only from the two rifle-caliber machine guns over the nose. These did have 1,000 rounds per gun, which does work out to be about a minute's firing time. Note, however, that those guns were synchronized to fire through the propeller arc, which means that their individual rates of fire were slower than those of the British guns, all of which were wing-mounted outside the prop disc.

More important - and this is a matter of the most elementary engineering and ballistics: to get these cannon to even fit into the tiny wings of the Messerschmitt 109, they had to be shortened, lightened, and charged with lighter and less potent shells than were guns mounted on the Panzer II tank, field anti-aircraft mounts, or ship-board stations. The effect of all this shortening and lightening and minimal powder charge meant the muzzle velocity of the aircraft 20 mm gun was very much reduced. The shells flew more slowly and arced rapidly downwards. Coupled with their far lower rate of fire than machine guns, the net effect was that it was next to impossible to actually hit an opposing British fighter, except by taking it by surprise from the rear, as it flew straight and level. In a dogfight, with opposing fighters maneuvering rapidly through three dimensions, the British batteries of eight machine guns were far more likely to score hits. And there's no doubt the Messerschmitt 109 was light enough in structure for British rifle-caliber bullets to do serious damage. I read one Hurricane pilot's account where a 109 attacked from the rear but missed him, and when the German misjudged their relative speeds, overshot and wound up right in front of the Hurricane. "I simply fired and he blew up. I was most astonished!"

Well, I wasn't astonished by this PBS Special…at least, not in a good way. Were it within my power, I'd make such a Special myself and patiently show how the Hawker Hurricane did most of the fighting, took most of the losses on the British side, and inflicted more casualties on the Lufwaffe than all other defenses combined. Including that glamorous Other plane! My column focus will stay for awhile. I hope my readership will, too.

Special or no Special, our modeling careers go on. I love to attend our monthly meetings. It often includes, in between the hustle and bustle of shopping, trading, and arranging the latest building efforts on the tables, conversations with our President. Usually the conversation is fairly routine, with him inevitably making a dig about my devotion to old 'moldy' kits. (Yes: he knows I build good modern ones, too.)

But sometimes he'll tell me something that makes me feel I'm having an 'out of body' experience, and can scarcely get my mind around it. Andrew Birkbeck has been coming to meetings of the IPMS Seattle almost since its inception, whereas I've been coming for 'only' about 12 years. Evidently the members and their motivations - at least some of theirs - were quite different from Nowadays.

At last meeting, Andrew remarked how much he enjoyed seeing the great variety of models on the tables, which pleasure I certainly share. Our Show-and-Tell tables are filled with a wide variety of subjects: armor, ships, cars, factual and fantasy spacecraft; figurines both menacing and flashy (sometimes both!); and all kinds of aircraft ancient and modern, large and small, civil and military. Then Andrew said he remembered the time when the mere presence of an armored vehicle, or anything else other than an airplane, would generate snide remarks from some members, along the lines of: "This is supposed to be a model airplane club…what's that thing doing here?"

During these last 12 years I've attended, I've never heard anything remotely like this, so I simply can't comprehend how such an attitude could ever have been seen. Maybe some of you other members remember it, although obviously none of you have that attitude…

Let me tell you how far out of my own experience such a 'provincial' attitude falls. Before I returned from the Dark Ages and came back to plastic modeling, I built flying radio control airplanes, and was a member of the Boeing Hawks club. We used to meet in the field by the Space Center in Kent, later at Longacres. I distinctly remember an evening where we were all gathered around, starting our own Show-and-Tell session, when a guy came by we didn't know. He politely asked if he could fly his little model, making some self-denigrating remark about not wanting to be in our way, and that we wouldn't be interested in what he brought. We practically grabbed hold of him bodily, and thrust him into our center, where we made him tell us all about his model. We had internal combustion engine power in our airframes of light-ply and fiberglass and Styrofoam, with multi-channel radio control systems driving sometimes quite sophisticated functions, such as retractable landing gear and deployable flaps. His plane was like a throwback to 'pre-technology' times, being a lightweight free-flight model, about a foot and a half in span, done in classic balsa stick-and-tissue construction, powered by loops of hand-wound rubber driving a hand-carved prop. As outdoor flying model airplanes go, ours and his could not have been more different. Yet we made him tell us all about how he scratch-built it from plans, how he'd come to pick that particular model in the first place - a plane from one of the potboiler swashbuckling shoot-'em-up action-adventure flying ace comic-book serials of the 1930s - and how far he'd gotten with his test flight program so far.

Some of us in the club had once built such light free-flight planes. Others had not, but all of us, without exception, were interested in his story and gave him a nice round of applause when he was finished. We all stopped flying our high-powered R/C planes to watch his successful little free flights. What a pleasure to see that little machine wheel around so elegantly, all by itself without human help, in the calm summer sky over the Green River valley. Some members - I count myself among them - were inspired, later, to get out our finest tools and lightest balsa and build a plane of our own of that type: very light, no high-tech stuff, just covered with tissue and powered with only a bit of rubber thread, a notch above ordinary office rubber bands. So different from the modeling we'd become accustomed to!

The point of my story is that we were modelers, and we all liked models; all models. How could it ever have been different in our own group? It is inconceivable to me that anyone could go to a model club meeting, look over the contents of the

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The Renwal 1/32nd Scale Teracruzer with Mace Missile Re-Release

by John DeRosia

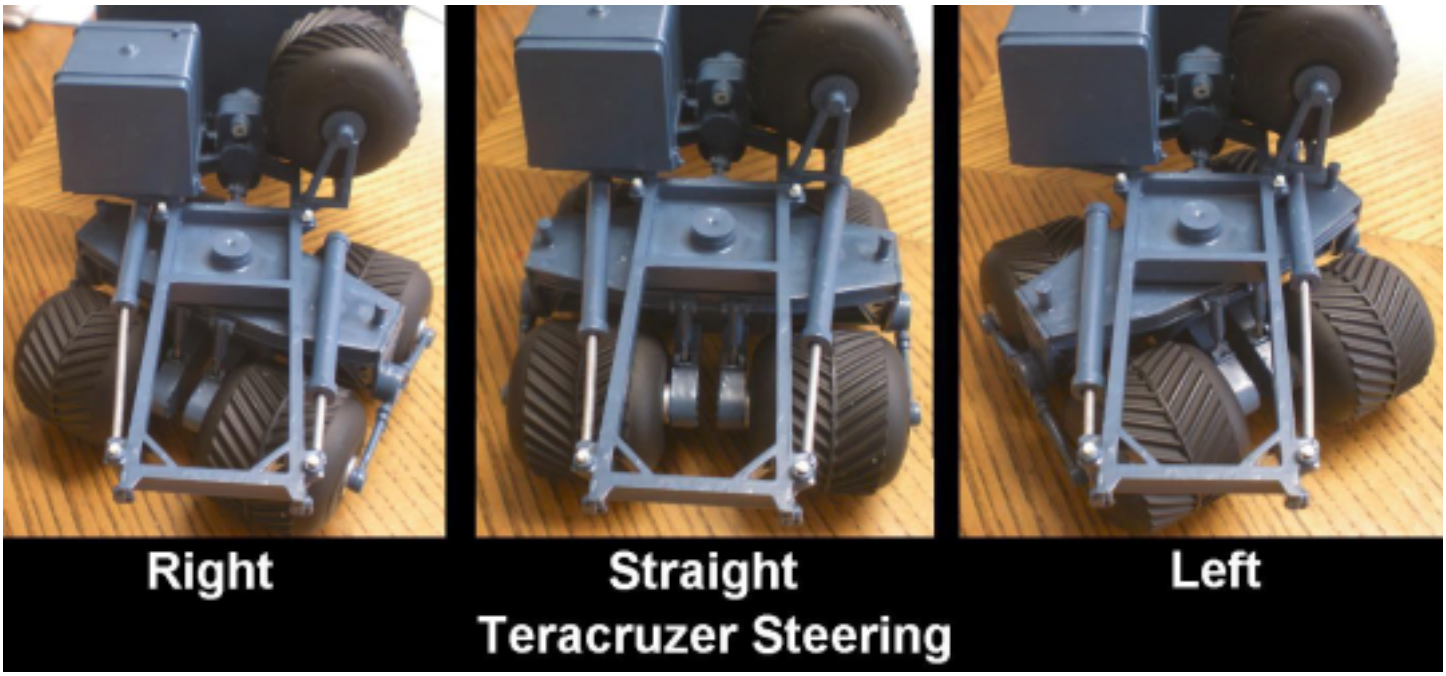
The advertising said:

"Fully operating model does everything but fire!" That's what they said about this kit when it was first released in the late 1950s and they're saying it again with this highly-anticipated reissue. Authentically scaled from U.S. Air Force blueprints, this limited edition, 1/32 scale, plastic kit of a Teracruzer towing an MGM-13 (mobile-launch) version of the Mace - a surface-to-surface missile first deployed in 1956 - includes movable parts, a finely detailed cab with opening doors, and five crew figures. 23¾" long; 278 parts, skill level 2."

They were not kidding. I believe ages ago when Renwal was still around, I had just about gotten their whole line of military models and built them. Back then, they were the absolute coolest models I had ever seen.

Forward to June 2012. Thank you Revell for re-releasing this kit. For what ever reason, the Teracruzer was NOT one I had gotten and built. So when it came out again - I had to get one once and for all. After hiring a moving company to deliver the HUGE box to my house (well it was a very large box) – I was salivating waiting to take the clear plastic wrapping off and look at what was inside. I may have had my contacts on backwards because I swear the contents were only taking up one-fourth of the available space in this box. That said, this was the only one of two negatives I encountered with the kit. The other was it did not come with any clear windows. No big deal since I used my own clear styrene for them. The five figures that were distorted - no big deal. I don't do figures!

The re-molding took place in Poland - and for what ever reason - having a 50-year-old mold and all the items being as crisp as



they day they were first made got me very excited. Very very few pieces in my kit had any flash on them. The high quality of this re-released kit was absolutely amazing to me. The instruction sheet also had 1-1/2 pages of nothing but part identification and DESCRIPTION of each and every item. Perfect for dummies like me who just don't have a degree in "Understanding Gizmology". Sure I know what a tire is and cab and seats - but not everything. I wish more modern instructions were like this in their identification of parts.

I actually started with the coolest tires and 'trucks' on any kit I had ever built. Each truck had four balloon tundra tires. Each truck if carefully built allows all four tires to pivot independently and roll. During this model build, the stars lined up, the moon was still yellow, and the oceans kept having tides - because everything worked when I was done. All trucks/tires rotated and pivoted. All of them!

The engineering on this kit still astounds me. All linkages, all hydraulics, and working features work! I did find while assembling the missile launcher frame and linkages that I would hand paint (Air Force Blue) a few moving parts at a time. Then I let this dry overnight, and the next day I gently 'moved/forced' the items to move/rotate and they did. Then I would add more paint to unpainted areas (remember- the paint seeps into all the moving links/pins) – and the following day repeat the process. When I was done, absolutely everything moved. I did make one exception - the cab doors. I glued these shut on purpose because I did not do too much to the inside of the cab. Just your basic colors and hint of a dash and steering wheel.

The following if carefully glued and painted work:

1. all three 'trucks' with four balloon tires each
2. the trailer pivots
3. the front vehicle two steering hydraulics cylinders
4. the missile lift frame two launcher hydraulics cylinders
5. the doors (if not glued shut, like I did)
6. the Mace missile attaches/detaches easily from the lift frame
7. the spare tire attaches/detaches
8. the fuel panel door openscloses on the first pod behind the cab

The rest of the kit went together like a Swiss watch. No kidding. The little flash on a very few of the parts made for easy clean up.

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Zvezda 1/35th Scale Russian Main Battle Tank T-90

by Andrew Birkbeck

I will start this review by stating that I have little knowledge of the workings of modern main battle tanks, but I do find them "really cool looking" and so jumped at the chance to build this new offering from Zvezda of Russia. With the turret and main hull festooned with blocks of ERA (Explosive Reactive Armor), carrying a massive 125mm smooth bore main gun, and the turret looking like something from a Star Wars movie, these beasts are very menacing looking!

The T-90 was originally envisaged as a stopgap tank, being developed by the Design Bureau of the Uralvagonzavod tank facility in Nizhni Tagil from the Soviet T-72BU. However, the designs which were slated to become the new MBT for the Soviet Armed Forces all suffered various problems, which were compounded as the Soviet Union disintegrated into political and economic chaos in the late 1980s and early 1990s. With the resulting new Russian state suffering from financial difficulties, cutbacks on military spending ensued, and the stopgap became the new Russian MBT.

Zvezda's kit is the first injection plastic model of this vehicle in 1/35th scale, and as such has been eagerly anticipated by modern armor modelers. The kit consists of seven sprues of injection plastic (six in a light gray-colored, soft plastic, a seventh in clear), plus a sheet of decals, a piece of

string from which to fashion tow cables, and two sections of nylon mesh for the various engine screens. For those familiar with it, the gray plastic parts are very reminiscent of the plastic used by Airfix kits, being rather soft. It reacts well to my two favorite plastic cements, Tamiya Green Bottle liquid cement, and Testors Black Bottle (thicker) liquid cement.

There is a LOT of plastic in this kit; in fact, it is by far the most detailed and intricate armor kit yet produced by Zvezda, at just over 450 injection molded parts. And the detail on these parts is top notch. I encountered very few ejection pin marks that need dealing with, and only a couple of areas involving minor sink mark issues on the parts. Due to the nature of the soft plastic used, there was a reasonable amount of work required to remove mold seams, but nothing that would tax the patience of a seasoned modeler. Parts fit for the most part was exemplary, and where the odd fit problem did occur, it was simply a matter of test fitting, a little sanding, and then gluing the part into position. No putty was required with my model.

The first 18 sections of the instructions concern the assembly of the space-age turret and main gun. The gun is a two-part unit, split down the center. Care is required in gluing together the two parts and

making sure they line up properly. Once the glued barrel has fully set, extreme care must then be taken to insure the removal of the resulting seam line so as to keep the barrel round. The nylon mesh came into play in Section 20 and 22. Zvezda provides the modeler with templates for cutting out the mesh, and following these templates resulted in nicely fitting sections of material which were easily glued into place using super glue. In an ideal world, Zvezda would have provided PE screens here, and the more fastidious might wish to replace the nylon mesh with suitable PE mesh, or await the release of an aftermarket PE detailing set. I was perfectly happy with the nylon parts.

The lower hull section of the kit is very well detailed, and care as usual must be taken to make sure all the parts are in alignment so that the road wheels will sit correctly. The track parts were particularly well detailed, being of the link and length type. Each section of track is in two parts, consisting of separate pads/track and then a second part for the track teeth. This all results in the excellent rendition of the track detail. The tow cable string was perfectly useable, utilizing super glue to attach it to the tow shackles in Section 29a.

Once the model is assembled, the kit provides the modeler with two basic schemes of indeterminate units. One is a multi colored scheme, the other a simple one-color green scheme. I chose the latter as I am not very adept at free hand airbrushing. In terms of decals. the markings consist of various turret numbers and that's about it.

In doing a little online research, I concluded that modern Russian tank green is roughly equivalent to FS 34079 Dark Green. I thus found a bottle of Model Master enamel paint in my supplies, which I lightened somewhat with Model Master British Gulf Armor Light Stone, which I also had in stock. Panel fade was achieved by adding more Light Stone to the Dark Green. All this was sealed with a coat of my favorite clear gloss, Tamiya X-22 acrylic gloss clear, suitably thinned with Mr Color Self Leveling (lacquer) thinner. The decals went on very well, utilizing Mr Color's two part decal setting solution process. The decals were then sealed with more Tamiya X-22. I then applied some oil washes to help pick out the raised detail, and when fully cured, I followed up with a coat of Vallejo Modelair matt clear. I then applied some additional weathering via oil paint, threw on a few light dustings of Tamiya XF-57 Buff for road dust, and called it a day.

Zvezda's new T-90 Russian MBT is without doubt their finest kit to date – hundreds of well detailed parts that go together without major effort, assembling into a very nice model without any hassles. If you enjoy building modern armor, then you really need to treat yourself to Zvezda's latest masterpiece. You won't be disappointed. My thanks to DragonUSA and IPMS-USA for providing me with the opportunity to review this excellent kit.

Trumpeter 1/700th Scale PLA Navy Aircraft Carrier

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

When most people think of an amusement park, thoughts turn towards giant spinning wheels, big tents, and maybe a roller coaster. But apparently to Ukraine and China, an amusement park is actually a thousand-foot long aircraft carrier. In 1998, the Admiral Kuznetsov-class aircraft carrier *Varyag* was sold to China for use as an amusement park. A precedent had been set, as China had also purchased the *Kiev* and set it up as a floating hotel. So when Chong Lot Travel Agency won the auction of the *Varyag* with a bid of $20 million, most thought that the *Varyag* would end up as some sort of floating attraction in China.

Instead, though, the ship went to the shipyard at Dalian in June 2005, where a major reworking began. With a planned sale of Sukhoi Su-33 naval fighters, the idea that the former *Varyag* would become a floating hotel or casino faded away, and it became apparent that China intended to rebuild the vessel and sail it as their first aircraft carrier. It was not until June 2011 that China finally admitted that they were building an aircraft carrier, and stated that this refurbished Russian ship would be used for training and as a pattern for an indigenous aircraft carrier design. The ship is expected to be handed over to the Chinese Navy sometime in 2012.

As the original is an Admiral Kuznetsov-class aircraft carrier, it is not surprising to see Trumpeter come out with a kit of the PLA Navy Aircraft Carrier, as they did the Kuznetsov several years ago. In fact, this kit is pretty much identical to that original release, with just some changes and improvements to the island and the inclusion of a small fret of photoetch. The decals are extensive, and like the original, the kit comes as either a full hull or waterline version. As nearly all the plastic and the assembly procedure is identical to the original release, I'll just focus on what's new in this kit.

Starting with the photo-etch fret, this is a small set, but it provides some very useful parts. The whip aerials on the side of the flight deck are replaced by photo-etch, which will result in a much more scale appearance. The rest of the photo-etch focuses on various antennae found on the island. These are ideal for photo-etch, as they invariably feature fine grids that are impossible to replicate realistically in injection plastic.

For the island, the original kit was nicely engineered to eliminate seams, but this new kit is even better. Utilizing what appear to be slide molds, the new island assembly is greatly simplified.

The main island assembly is made up from three parts, as opposed to the twelve in the original kit. The island is a different shape and features a different antenna configuration, so don't think you can buy this kit and build up a Russian Kuznetsov-class carrier. The simplified construction continues with those various antennae, which include several domes as well as a tall pillar with several antenna sets on top.

The aircraft complement is slightly different between the two kits as well. While the original Kuznetsov came with Su-33s, MiG-29s, Su-25s, Su-34s, Yak-141s, Ka-27s, La-29s, and Ka-31s (a rather impressive fleet of aircraft), the Chinese version comes with the J-15 (the Chinese improved but visually identical Su-33), the Ka-28 (visually identical to the Ka-27), the Ka-31, and the Z-8. The two Kamov helicopters have the option of folded rotors, and there are enough aircraft provided to build up a suitably busy flight deck, with eight J-15s and eight helicopters.

The decals include full deck markings, along with hull numbers. The latter are currently not used on the real ship, but there are enough numbers provided to cover whatever the Chinese decide to number the ship. The flight wing comes with Chinese national markings and some small numbers, but the latter I have not seen used on PLAN aircraft.

Overall, this is a great reboot of the already good Trumpeter Kuznetsov. If you missed that kit the first time around, here's a chance to build it up as a ship that's undoubtedly going to be in the news for a while yet. My thanks to Stevens International for the review copy.

Zvezda 1/72nd Scale Ashigaru-Yari

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

The ashigaru were foot soldiers employed by the samurai class during feudal Japan, originating with wandering mercenary farmers that were used during the constant warfare in Japan between the 1300s and 1500s. The most common weapon employed by the ashigaru was the pike, or yari. The yari came in two major types, the kama yari that featured additional horizontal blades, and the su yari, which was a simple straight spear. The blades of the yari came in many shapes and sizes, with the most common being a straight double-edge design about a foot long.

Zvezda has produced quite a few kits recently aimed at the wargaming market, and this is their latest set designed for the historical wargame "Samurai Battle". For those into the wargaming world, this game is based on Art of Tactic and Command & Colors, and is designed from the beginning for expansion. This set provides the gamer with a set of ashigaru yari and comes molded in gray plastic, with colored flags to help differentiate teams.

The figures themselves are nicely made, cast mostly as one piece. There are five figures total, including two kneeling and three standing. One standing figure is molded complete, while the rest all have at least one separate arm, and some feature separate details such as scabbards. All five figures fit onto a keyed base that will fit onto the large base that has slots for six figures.

For painting, the only reference is the boxtop illustration. Luckily, this is quite well done and should provide plenty of information to finish your figures accurately. The flags for the figures fit into large holes in the side or back of the figure, so if you want to finish these without those, be ready to fill some holes. A small decal sheet provides markings for those flags to further differentiate between units on the game floor.

While designed for wargamers, these figures are nicely done and could make for a nice set of standalone figures. Japanese soldiers from this era are colorful, so finishing them as standalone figures would result in some neat looking subjects. My thanks to Dragon USA for the review sample.

Upcoming Shows

9/15/2012
OHMS & Evergreen Aviation Museum Model Show and Contest 2012 - Oregon Historical Modelers Society
Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum
500 NE Michael King Smith Way,
McMinnville, OR
Brian Yee 503-309-6137

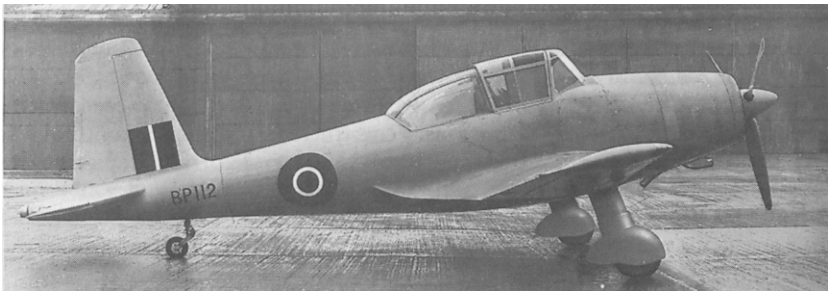
10/6/2012
18th Annual "Show Off The Good Stuff" Model Show & Contest - Palouse Area Modelers
Moscow Moose Lodge
210 N Main St., Moscow, ID
Scott Rowland 208-843-5137

10/6/2012
IPMS Vancouver 42nd Fall Show
Bonsor Recreation Complex
6550 Bonsor Avenue,
Burnaby, BC, Canada
Peter Hickey 604-988-3253

10/7/2012
T.A.M.S. Fall Nationals
Scale Automotive Contest
Lakewood Elks
6313 75th St. W.,
Lakewood, WA
Gary Davis 253-472-3447
Harold Conrad 253-770-9470

Name That Plane

The new NWSM display at the Museum of Flight features training aircraft of all eras and countries. It doesn't have one of these. Can you name this aircraft? If you can, there's no prize, but I'll be **very** impressed. Answer on page 16.



Teracruzer

from page 11

Looking on the Internet at the real vehicles and missiles showed they were in pretty harsh conditions. That was one reason I weathered mine a little extra. Ideally you can't go wrong on military vehicles being too dirty - unless they are right off the factory floor.

There were many missile color themes also shown on the Internet. I did not want to make mine a bright orange so I went with a silver/aluminum look. They also had several 'test color patches' on them – but mine came about because of only one reason. THUMB PRINT! Yes- right in the middle of the top of the missile. RATS! So I got out my trusty solid red decal sheet and cut a few patches and that's how they came to be. And you thought I did really good research - ha!

The vehicle still looks like something out of science fiction. I can only imagine the terror they must have instilled in real people in the 1950s when they were driving around town.

There were actually four real vehicles that made up the Teracruzer/Mace missile system. The four vehicle types were - 1) Fueling, 2) Warhead carrier, 3) Missile trailer tower, and 4) Crane to put it all together on the battle field. If expense were no object, it would be fun to build all four versions with three more kits.

There is a real one (the last one?) still working up in Alaska for some gold mining company. It is in negotiation for going to a museum since none of the drive vehicles seem to be anywhere. Lots of missiles and trailers, but why no vehicles exist is one of the mysteries of our time.

If you want something totally different and yet a joy to build I can't say enough about this kit.

Have fun, then have more fun, then enjoy. That's what modeling is all about to me.

Hurricane Theater

from page 9

Show-and-Tell table, and not take inspiration and pleasure from its variety. Or would not want to hear what the other attendees would say about how they built their models. It is the primary reason I come to our meetings myself.

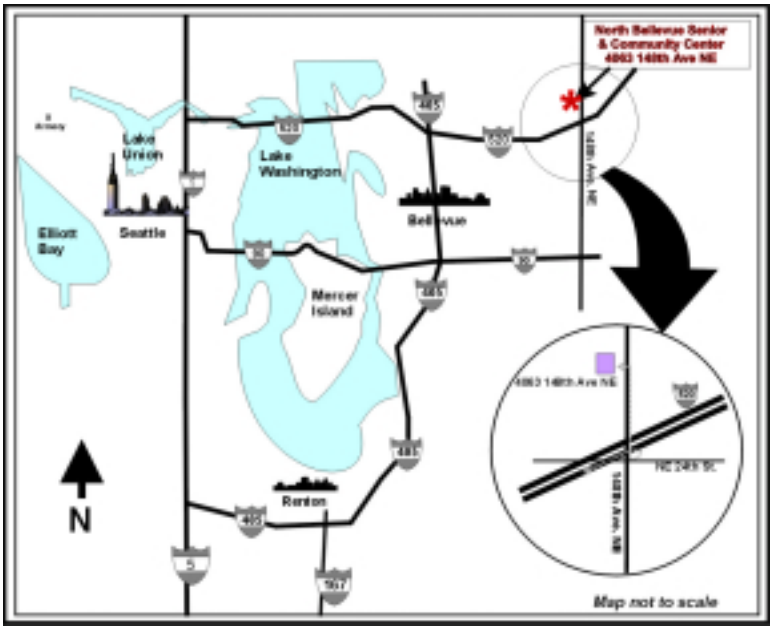
Who knows what I'll bring to next meeting? Who knows what any of you will bring to the next meeting? We go to our meetings see what will be there!

Name That Plane Answer

It's the Boulton-Paul P.112. The P.112 was a three-seat elementary trainer which mated the fuselage of the Balliol to an Alvis Leonides engine and a new wing with a non-retractable undercarriage. Never heard of it? That's because it was never actually built. But it's perhaps the most realistic full-size mock-up of an unbuilt aircraft project I've ever seen...

Meeting Reminder

August 11



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.