

# Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS-USA  
January 2002

## PREZNOTES



Best of wishes to all of you in the new year of 2002. I'd like to start off the new year with a quote attributed to a 24th Century starship Captain; "Someone once told me that time was a predator that stalked us all our lives. But I rather believe that time is a companion who goes with us on the journey, and reminds us to cherish every moment because they'll never come again."

It is truly amazing what one can accomplish without the Internet. I had taken the last two weeks of the year as vacation, to just relax and unwind at home. The only definite plans I had were to try to wrap up a few of the unfinished models on the workbench, and maybe try some Christmas shopping from the comfort of our computer. Just at the start of my vacation the computer "bit the big one". As I write this, our computer guru still has not been able to raise it from the dead. The witch doctor couldn't even help. It's dead. Definitely deceased. Bleeding demised. Passed on. No more. Ceased to be. Expired and gone to meet its maker. Late. Stiff. Bereft of life. Resting in peace. Pushing up the daisies. Rung down the curtain and joined the choir invisible. Pinin' for the fjords (?).

We have since purchased a new system, but it will not be ready for use for several more days. If you have been wondering why I have not responded to any email you may have sent in the last few weeks now you know why. Anyway, it's late at night (during the aforementioned vacation), there's no surfing the net - no e-Bay, no busty redheads, no information on 447th BG colors and markings, no *Internet Modeler*. What else is there to do? The paint is still drying on the two models on the workbench and I'd rather not start something new. **Ta-Da!** I've finally found the incentive to edit my 30+ year magazine collection. I have started ripping them apart - to save only the articles of interest to me, and about what I have in my kit

collection. I have found information that I could have used with several projects in the last year or so and information on projects planned for the near future. I have gained a considerable amount of space on my bookshelves and when finished, we will have room for all of our books (Jill's and mine) in a new entertainment center we hope to build later this year in our family

*Continued on page 3*

### IPMS Seattle 2002 Meetings (all second Saturday)

January 12  
February 9  
March 9 (Spring Show)  
April 13  
May 11  
June 8  
July 13  
August 10  
September 14  
October 12  
November 9  
December 14

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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 each month, (see below for actual meeting dates), at the **North Bellevue Community/Senior Center, 4063-148th Ave NE**, in Bellevue. See the back page for a map. Our meetings begin at 10:00 AM, except as noted, and usually last for two to three hours. Our meetings are very informal, and are open to any interested plastic modeler, regardless of interests. Modelers are encouraged to bring their models to the meetings. Subscriptions to the newsletter are included with the Chapter dues. Dues are \$24 a year, and may be paid to Norm Filer, our Treasurer. (See address above). We also highly recommend our members join and support IPMS-USA, the national organization. See below for form. Any of the members listed above will gladly assist you with further information about the Chapter or Society.

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

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

### Upcoming Meeting Dates

The IPMS Seattle 2002 meeting schedule is as follows. All meetings are from **10 AM to 1 PM**, except for the March Spring Show. To avoid conflicts with other groups using our new 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.

**January 12, 2002**

**March 9, 2002 (Spring Show)**

**February 9, 2002**

**April 13, 2002**

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION			
IPMS No.: _____ <small>(leave blank)</small>	Name: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>FIRST</span> <span>M.</span> <span>LAST</span> </div>		
Address: _____ _____			
City: _____		State: _____	Zip: _____
Signature (required by PO): _____			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span><input type="checkbox"/> Adult: \$19</span> <span><input type="checkbox"/> Junior (17 years old or younger): \$9</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span><input type="checkbox"/> Trade Member: \$19</span> <span><input type="checkbox"/> Canada &amp; Mexico: \$25</span> <span><input type="checkbox"/> Other Foreign: \$28</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span><input type="checkbox"/> Family (Adult dues + \$5, one set magazines, # of membership cards required: _____)</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span><input type="checkbox"/> If recommended by an IPMS member,</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>list his/her name and member number</span> <span>(name)</span> <span>(IPMS#)</span> </div>			
<b>P.O. Box: 6138</b> <b>Warner Robins, GA 31095-6138</b>			
Check out our web page: <a href="http://www.ipmsusa.org">www.ipmsusa.org</a>			

## North West Scale Modelers Model Display and Workshop

North West Scale Modelers are sponsoring a model display and workshop at the Museum of Flight in Seattle on Saturday and Sunday, February 9 and 10. This is not a contest, but an opportunity for all interested modelers to display their handiwork. All subjects in all scales – aircraft, armor, autos, ships, figures, etc. – are welcome. The display will be from 10 AM to 4:30 PM both days. NWSM invites all modelers to take part.

The display will feature the public unveiling of the Champlin Collection in 1/48<sup>th</sup> Scale (hopefully – see page 5!) This is a collection of 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale models of all 28 airplanes in the MOF's newly acquired Champlin Fighter Collection. The actual airplanes will not be on display in Seattle for a few more years, so this is your chance to get a preview.

Admission to the display is included with regular Museum admission. The Museum of Flight is on the west side of Boeing Field, at 9404 East Marginal Way.

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## Terry's AVG Book Is Out



IPMS Seattle member Terry Clements' book *American Volunteer Group Colours and Markings* has just been published by Osprey. A full review will appear in next month's issue.

## IPMS Seattle Web Site Back Up

After being down for a short time, the IPMS Seattle web site is back up and running. The web site went down in early December when the server that had been hosting the site went out of business. We have changed servers, and the web site is back up, though not all pages of the site are yet operational. Special thanks are due to Tracy White and Jon Fincher for helping to find a new home.

The IPMS Seattle web site can be accessed at <http://www.ipms-seattle.org>

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## Volunteers Needed for Spring Show

The IPMS Seattle Spring Show is fast approaching – March 9 is not as far away as it may seem! As always, we will need your help to put on a good show. Our move to the Bellevue Community/Senior Center means that this year we cannot set up the contest room until the morning of the show, so we need as many volunteers as possible to help with setting up the room on Saturday morning, and then with taking down the room after the show is over later that day.

We also may need help with registration, and helping to direct traffic in the model room. If you can help with any of these duties, even for an hour, we'd love to have you. Please see show coordinators Tracy White and Jon Fincher, or any club officer, for more information or to sign up.

## IPMS Seattle Decides Not to Bid for 2004 Convention

At our December meeting, a vote was held among the membership on whether to submit a bid to host the 2004 IPMS-USA National Convention. The vote was overwhelmingly against submitting a bid for the 2004 convention, but the possibility of submitting a bid for a later convention at an appropriate time was held open.

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## Preznotes

*from page 1*

room. I expect to fill only one or two three-drawer file cabinets with my newly organized files. I am about 50-60% through my collection, including *Air Enthusiast*, *Air International*, *FineScale Modeler*, *Military Model Preview*, *Airfix Magazine*, and *Air Classics*. I am about to start on *Wings*, *Airpower*, and several others. I have created quite a stack of partial magazines and if anyone is interested in what I have left give me a call or talk to me at the next meeting. I also used some of my time off to finish off a few of the more difficult models including the CollectAire X-15 and F2G Corsair. I actually finished about 13 models in 2001, down from the year 2000 primarily because of the Seattle Mariners (I gotta blame somebody!). No award winners, but I made sure that every model I worked on had some aspect of **fun** to it.

At our meeting Saturday, I plan to discuss possible changes in direction for our monthly meetings. Would you like to see more speakers, less show and tell, more seminars and how to demonstrations? Think about it and we'll talk on Saturday.

See you at the meeting,

*Terry*

## Annum Horribilis! (With Apologies to Her Majesty The Queen of England, And Subtitled 'On Snatching Defeat From the Jaws of Victory')

by Jacob Russell

Murphy and I came to terms recently on his subletting my apartment since he has taken up more or less permanent residence. We agreed that there was no need for him to augment the grocery budget as he derives all necessary nourishment from my continued modeling misfortune. A dutiful host, I seem destined to keep him fat and happy! I hope the arrangement is short term because Murphy and his Law are **not** welcome members of the Russell household. Sort of like distant relations who came for a visit and never left. With this in mind I thought I'd share with you my thoughts on 2001, the year in which I failed to complete a single model.

I started the year with the best of intentions. I had finally shed the idea that I didn't deserve the best quality kits I could afford. I thank my good friends Chris Cowx, Jim Schubert, and Ted Holowchuk for disabusing me of the notion that I was forever destined to build second-tier kits. I immediately ran into problems with the Hasegawa 1/48th scale Nakajima Ki-84 Hayate (Frank) that I chose for my first top quality project. I solicited advice on painting this model and received so much contradictory advice that the end result was an example of "Modeling By Committee." I also tried mixing enamel paints with PPG acrylic lacquer thinner which I'd heard gave a smoother finish, and I used the Duracryl clear acrylic gloss of which Ted had spoken so highly. I had applied the decals when I first showed Ted the model. After looking at it for several minutes he asked me to hold out my hands and then proceeded to rap my knuckles with a ruler, pointing out the many problems with the

model's basic construction. The paint was also far too thick and the Duracryl gloss had attacked both the enamel paint and the decals. I genuinely want to improve my skills, and I've found that one of the best ways to do this is to show in-progress models to more experienced builders. After talking to Ted I stripped the model of all decals and paint and started all over. I decided to put the Frank back in the box and work on it again in the fall. I'd certainly have completed several models by then and would therefore have some "free" time to repaint it.

For my next project I decided to turn to God's Scale, otherwise known as 1/72nd. After vacillating between Spitfire kits from both Italeri and Hasegawa I chose the latter's excellent Mk.VIII. I decided on a single color RAAF camouflage scheme for an easy paint job. I figured that a top quality 1/72nd scale kit would be something that I could finish quickly. It was high time to finish something. I have a habit of trying something new with each project - a habit that perhaps I should get out of. For this model I decided to try out the Flexi-Files that Ted had recommended. The Flexi-Files are excellent tools-but not in **my** hands. Not yet. I put a flat ridge all along the fuselage top, which should be rounded. Then Jim Schubert pointed out that I'd put another "crease" in the port wing leading edge. Rather than putting that model in a box for "future work" I've left it on my worktable in the hope that, faced with a daily reminder of misapplied zeal, I won't repeat the same mistakes. Another project to "get back to later." Much later.

I learned in March that the Aircraft Resource Center website had announced a Bf 109 Contest and decided to enter the OOB category using a Hobbycraft G-5/6 kit that I'd received from a modeler in Ireland. I figured that this would be an easy build (yes, **another** one) and a needed break from the Ki-84 and Spitfire fiascos. I also decided to try acrylic paints on this model. At the time I modeled in my bedroom and

didn't want to expose my family to the toxic lacquers and enamels that I'd used exclusively. I brought the model to the March IPMS meeting. Perhaps I should have known better by now but I showed Ted the model after I'd already started painting it. Again I held out my hands and had my knuckles rapped. Ted pointed out problem areas critical to having a decently finished model, and once again I stripped off the paint and started again. Can you see a pattern emerging here? Between March and October (where I showed the model again) I moved twice and the model took a back seat to those concerns. After the October meeting I finished applying the decals and moved to the finishing stages. Murphy was leaning over my shoulder when I applied the oil washes because disaster struck: I left the excess wash on for too long and ruined the paint. I did the exact same thing to the 1/72nd scale Italeri Bf 109F that I built and reviewed for the newsletter two years ago, so I clearly should have known better! Ted has pointed out that almost every model can be salvaged from such disasters although lately he has been wringing his hands at my continued problems and mistakes. I came very close to giving the model an unscheduled high speed "test flight" into the nearest wall - or perhaps out the window - but a cooler head prevailed. The following day I stripped off the decals and paint, and started all over **again**.

There certainly **is** a pattern emerging here. In each unfinished project I tried a process, technique, or tool that I hadn't used before. And in each instance I experienced problems. I was **very** discouraged and although I did cease modeling for isolated periods at no point did I consider stopping altogether. There is a reason that experienced modelers recommend finding a system that works for you and sticking to it. What works for others may not work for me, and vice-versa. After

*Continued on page 9*



## Never Volunteer

by Bill Osborn

You would think that by the time I'd reached my age I would have learned not to volunteer for anything, but I haven't. Way back when I went into the Army, I was told, "Don't volunteer." This advice stuck with me for a long time. Then as time slipped by, and my memory started to go, I seemed to forget to never volunteer. I've been asked a few times over the years to build models as retirement gifts for some of the people I've worked with. A couple of them came out OK, but some were so bad that I wouldn't even give them to the neighborhood kids to blow up with firecrackers.



Now I've gone and done it again. This time I didn't really volunteer, it was more like, "Bill, we would really like to have a model built for the Museum of Flight, for the Champlin Fighter Collection they are getting."

Well, being the kind and generous guy I am (?), could I let the club and my friends down? Perhaps it would have been better to tell them that there are a lot of other guys who would make better models than I do, but I think that by the time Will got around to me most of the members had either accepted the job or turned him down, and he was scraping the bottom of the barrel.

Well, volunteer, I did. Will was very kind, and furnished me with a Blue Max kit of the subject, an SE.5. As most of you know by now, most of the aircraft that are being modeled for this project are not even close to any of the kits that are available. Will gave me a Blue Max SE.5a, which is a limited run kit and rather expensive, or so I've been told. After cleaning up all the parts and checking them out, I thought it might be a good idea to try and find the old Monogram kit. Well my luck changed; the Monogram kit is an SE.5. True, it's showing its age, but at least it's the right model.

The kit may be old, but it's not that bad. Two things I've found that will need to be fixed are the wing struts and the interior. The wing struts are really crude and fit (?) into a slot molded into the lower surface of the upper wing. No big problem, just fill in the slot and make new struts. The cockpit is a different story – the only thing you get is a crude seat.

Since this is going to the museum, it should have something to fill the gaping hole in the top of the body. Thanks to the kind folks in Mesa, I have some very nice shots of the cockpit. These photos show a whole lot more detail than I really wanted to put in. However, in for a penny, in for a pound. I've never been one to put much interior into a model, unless it's a good resin set or one that comes with the kit. By the time the model is finished most of the effort will have gone into the cockpit. At least I hope so. The rigging is the only thing that still has me concerned. The flying wires are not wires, but flat tension rods. Once upon a time I made tension rods for a 1/32<sup>nd</sup> scale P-26 out of flattened monell tubing. However my supply has long since dried up – I retired. If I don't say anything, who'll know?

This would be a good kit for my collection if I just built it out of the box and put the pilot figure in the cockpit to hide the otherwise empty hole. Needless to say, this has been a real and ongoing challenge. I hope I remember not to volunteer again.

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## Dust in the Wind

via IPMS/Mississippi Modelers-Tupelo

Models of military soft-skins and some cars can gain a great deal of realism by adding a layer of dust to their windows and windshields. During the final weathering stages, simply use an airbrush to lightly mist the "glass" with a thinned mix of light sand-colored paint. Acrylic paint will work very well in this role, as the drying time is very quick. Thin the paint with isopropyl alcohol to further speed the drying.

While this will look tremendous, you can go a step further. Before spraying any paint, consider adding windshield wiper swipes. This is easily done by cutting templates out of low-tack clear scotch tape. Determine the width of the kit's wiper blades and lay out an appropriate pattern on the tape with a ballpoint pen. Cut this pattern out and apply to the windshield. Now you are ready to spray on the dust! Do this in layers and don't overdo it. Once dry, peel the masks away and ...voila! Personally, I continue one more step and spray a final dusting after the masks are off. This looks a bit more realistic as the glass would be sure to get dirty from both sides and no wipers can remove all that!

As always, experiment on an old kit first, both for fun and to avoid ruining your work.

## Revell 1/24<sup>th</sup> Scale Mini Cooper (R53)

by Jon Fincher

BMW has released a new version of the Mini Cooper, a car with an almost cult status for Euro car fans. The new Mini Cooper keeps in touch with its roots, but adds new technology and distinctive 21st century styling to an old Euro favorite.

The late John Cooper started building F3, F2, and F1 racing cars in the BMC garage in Surbinton, England, from the 1940s through 1960, winning championships along the way. With the blessings of Sir Alec Issigonis, the original Mini was built for rally and saloon car racing. The car proved as worthy as its F1 cousins, winning the European Rally Championships as well as the Monte Carlo Rally three times. During this time, the production Minis were also selling like mad, in the process becoming a symbol of the swinging '60s in England. 150,000 units of the quirky little car were produced through 1971, and used models can still be seen and bought in Europe and the United States.

By the 1980s, John Cooper Garages were providing aftermarket conversion kits to the U.S. and Japanese markets. The success of these kits led Cooper to redesign the engine and relaunch the Mini in the 1980s, again with immediate success. Further enhancements and redesigns led to no fewer than nine different Mini Cooper variants being sold worldwide through 2000. In July 2001, BMW started producing the latest variant of the Mini Cooper, but John Cooper Works continues to sell aftermarket parts and conversion kits for classic Mini Coopers.

In 2001, BMW undertook a redesign of the classic Mini Cooper, introducing modern technology while retaining the distinctive style and flavor of the European favorite. Under the hood, a new 1.6 liter 16 valve motor powers the 3.5 m car with up to 115

hp, and the car itself features air conditioning, ABS, electronic stability control, as well as modern safety features such as front and side airbags, crumple zones, and side impact protection.

The Revell 1:24 Mini Cooper reflects the BMW redesign of the Mini, and is molded by Revell AG. Four white plastic sprues and one clear sprue are separately bagged, with two sprues of chromed pieces left loose in the box. Four rubber tires are also bagged when the box is open. The kit is a curbside, and the detail on the chassis is limited due to the modern covered nature of German motors, as in the new Audi and VW engines.



The molding is very good, thoroughly modern and typical of Revell and Revell AG standards. The body of the car consists of six parts – the aforementioned chassis, the interior floor pan, the body itself, front grill, the clear windows (front and rear windshields and side windows are molded as one part), and a separate roof. While the separation of the roof from the body of the car is unusual and may seem to complicate the fitting of the roof properly, the dry fit is very nice and seems to present no immediate problems. The color scheme depicted on the box front of a red body with white roof is very easily handled using this engineering (i.e. no masking).

The interior floor pan is very simple, with positive locators for the front seats and molded in rear seats. There are also

positive locators to attach the floor pan to the chassis. The chassis includes partial molded front suspension and a molded exhaust system. The exhaust system is separated in places from the chassis itself, so while painting the exhaust is made easier, painting the underside of the floor pan before assembly is necessary. Separate interior door panels are also provided, as is a detailed five-piece dash assembly.

The front suspension is partially molded into the chassis, but a three-piece suspension assembly is provided for both front and rear suspensions. There is no brake detail given, with a three-piece wheel assembly consisting of an inner wheel, the outer chrome rim, and rubber tire completing that assembly. The chrome pieces on my kit were hit and miss – one sprue was fine, while the second sprue (consisting of the dash and wheel rims) were spotty and unsatisfactory. Stripping the chrome and replating those pieces will be the most difficult part of this assembly.

The eight page instructions are rather complete and well done for a kit of this low complexity. A small decal sheet is also provided with dash and body decals, as well as two sets of Euro-style license plates reading “Mini Cooper”.

The kit is a must-have for Mini Cooper fans, as well as for car modelers looking for something different and relatively quick to add to their collections. Estimates of an out of the box build-up of this kit range from 10 to 20 hours, dependant mostly on body prep and paint cure times. The simple chassis and interior designs help speed the build time without compromising detail or quality. The chrome plating leaves something to be desired, but isn't unfixable. This cute and quirky car is sure to attain cult status just as its predecessor did, and the model is sure to attract attention and second-glances as frequently as the real car does.

*[Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl at [www.internetmodeler.com](http://www.internetmodeler.com) for permission to use Jon, Terry, and Gordon's articles - ED]*

## 101st Spaceborne, 2010 Ft Duquesne Military Miniatures #602, 150mm Scale Sculpted by Paul Keefe

by Terry D. Moore

I first saw this figure at the 2000 IPMS-USA national convention in Dallas. There were three in the contest and one in the vendors' room. I could not leave without it.



The model is a very nice sculpt with a very animated pose. It represents a fully outfitted 101st Spaceborne GI with the composite graphite/ceramic/boron semi-powered armor suit (SPAS) that is the highly favored system for the unit. He is also equipped with the reticule sight equipped helmet with HUD, Colt M92A3 pulse laser with back mounted laser power pack, and Remington M38 17mm automatic.

Very minimal cleanup was required - I think I spent about an hour cleaning up the half-dozen parts. One reason I like this figure so much is that it gave me an opportunity to use several painting techniques including airbrush, wash/dry brush, and oils.

I started by airbrushing the SPAS suit in standard class R camouflage (R= whatever color of paint I could Reach). After the pattern was applied I sprayed the figure with multiple coats of Duracryl gloss automotive lacquer. I then applied an oil wash to bring out recesses, panel lines, and shadow areas. After the wash had dried I sprayed the model with dullcoat, then, when dry, I drybrushed the figure with an off-white oil paint to bring out the highlights. When **that** was dry, I applied another coat of dullcoat.

I then painted the cloth portions of his uniform using enamel for a base coat and then painting highlights and shadows using oil paints. The trick with oils is to use as little paint as possible to cover the area you want to paint - my rule of thumb is that if you think you don't have enough paint on the brush, you probably have too much paint on the brush. Always keep a paint rag handy to wipe off the excess paint. I saved the head for last, as I could paint and attach it after it was finished.

I had primed the face with flat white primer. I use Grumbacher and Winsor & Newton oils. For flesh tones I use titanium white, burnt sienna and yellow ochre. I mix the paint on a hard pallet (ceramic tile) although I know some modelers that use card stock to leach out excess oil. Basically I mix three levels of color: one to represent highlight areas (using more white), one for basic skin tones and one for shadow areas (using more sienna). I usually apply the highlight color first to the forehead, bridge of the nose, top of the cheeks, above the upper lip and so on. I then apply the shadow colors under the chin, any folds in the skin, and above the eyes. After that I apply the base skin color to those areas not painted with highlight or shadow colors. I try not to make the base color touch the highlight or shadow areas. One important thing to remember is to not clean



your brush with thinner between these colors, otherwise you will dilute the paint. I just clean the brush with a clean dry rag between colors.

At this stage switch to a clean dry brush to blend the highlights, base color and shadows together, but that's not a necessity, you can use the original brush. If you missed the part about too much paint on the brush you will end up pushing a lot of paint around until you have a solid color on your figure. Remember, with oils a little bit of paint will go a very long way.

I finished the base by applying a thin oil wash over it, without primer. The brownish paint over the tan resin gave it a somewhat "otherworldly" look. The last thing I did was to achieve a snow blown look by applying microballoons, which give a good snow effect.

A delightful model to assemble and paint. It took only three or four evenings to finish and I think what I enjoyed most was the fact that I was only limited by my imagination in the colors I used.



## Monsters In Motion 1/35th Scale Moonbus from 2001: A Space Odyssey

by Gordon Erickson

As a lad of 13 the glory of the next millennium unfolded before me in a dark Everett movie theatre. I was enraptured by the technological marvels flying through deep space before my eyes, enamored with the way the future was to be!

In the waning months of the first year of that new millennium we now know that the space program was never anything more to American politicians than a big “up yours” to the Soviets. Today there are no manned space probe missions to the outer planets or the giant space ships to take them there. There is no commercial shuttle service to bases on the moon or to space stations in earth orbit. There isn’t even a Pan American Airlines anymore.

And since the 1969 Aurora kit there has been no model available of 2001’s Moonbus – until now. In development for the better part of a year, Southern California’s Monsters In Motion recently released an all-resin 1/35th scale kit of this unique lunar transit vehicle.

In Arthur C. Clarke’s novel, the Moonbus is a tracked ground vehicle that has the ability to “hop” over small obstacles on its underside rocket motors. For the motion picture it was apparently decided that it would be much more dynamic and visually interesting, albeit improbable, if it flew over the lunar surface instead. As far as I can tell, all they did to reflect this new mode of travel was to take the caterpillar treads off

of the running gear and call them landing legs.

My MIM Moonbus arrived in a sturdy white box jam-packed with peanuts and bubble wrap to good effect – no parts were broken or damaged in shipping. The kit consists of approximately 55 pieces of mint-green resin (an interesting departure from MIM’s usual Pepto-Bismol Pink blend). The centerpiece of this kit is the two **huge** castings that form the top and bottom of the fuselage. The top weighs in at nearly a pound and the bottom a



whopping three lbs. plus (they are obviously **not** hollow-cast). In fact, I had some initial concern over whether the resin landing gear could support the weight of the finished model but upon further inspection it looks like they will do just fine. There are virtually no air bubble holes in the top and bottom and very few throughout the rest of the kit.

There are two small sheets of decals, aluminum rods for the landing gear shock absorbers, and a sheet of clear plastic for the windows. My kit came with “interim” assembly instructions with a promise from MIM to send the “final” instructions free of charge as soon as they become available.

MIM appears to have done (most) of their homework on this kit. Compared to pictures captured from a DVD of the movie

the kit’s details closely match the ones seen in the film. You will be able to create an impressive replica of the Moonbus from this kit.

There are virtually no air bubble holes in the top and bottom and very few throughout the rest of the kit.

Some highlights of the kit:

The **size** – at 1/35th scale it’s 16 inches long.

The main instrument panel is a well-detailed match for the original as is the rest of the interior.

There are two resin parts to represent the cargo being carried in the passenger compartment and they feature great detail – the one for the left side even has the astronaut’s life support backpacks (you will have to add your own tie-down rings and white nylon rope to secure the cargo to the floor).

The five astronaut figures (two pilots and three passengers) are individually sculpted and well posed although I would have liked one of the pilots to have his hand on the joystick. The passengers are re-enacting the “chicken sandwich” scene from the movie (they even include the lunch box!)

The interim instructions are adequate for assembling the Moonbus but the colors called out for the interior are questionable. In fact, they don’t even match the colors used in the build-up on the web site. The passenger cabin was filmed in a weird blue-green light and makes color identification difficult. I plan to do my interior in medium and dark grays. A copy of the film on VHS or DVD will be very useful in fine-tuning the details.

There is one perplexing question in regards to the kit – how to properly display it. The Moonbus has very small windows and the large resin fuselage castings do not lend themselves well to



the wiring that would be needed to light it. I am probably going to display mine with the top removed.

The decals include markings for the space suits and backpacks as well as some video screen decals although they are the wrong size and shape to fit the screens on the

9000 eye decals for no reason I can determine.

The one big problem in this kit is that MIM appears to have used the old Aurora Moonbus for their dimensions and that kit was slightly too long in the nose which means the MIM Moonbus is about 3/4" too

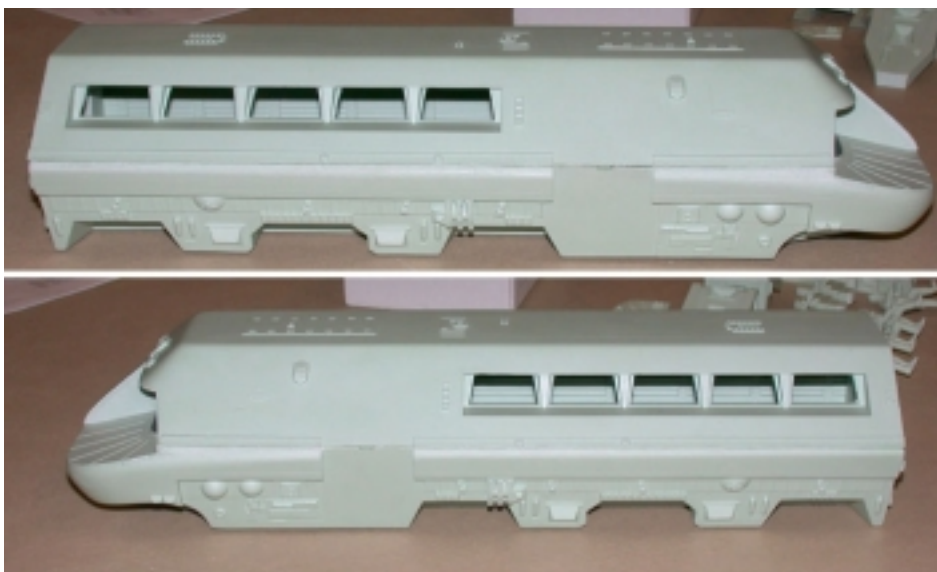
long – you would have to remove almost all of the area between the back of the cockpit seats and the forward bulkhead to get it right. Unfortunately, that would be a **very** impractical thing to do on this model.

It would be wonderful to have a completely accurate



main instrument panel. The decal sheet also includes the spurious USAA decals (United States Astronautics Administration) that appeared in the Aurora Moonbus kit but never on the movie miniature. There are even a couple of HAL

kit of the Moonbus but on the whole I am very happy with my purchase and I consider it a good value for the money.



## High Planes Update

by Greg Meggs

via Keith Laird

The much delayed 1/72nd scale Sea Vixen from High Planes Models is now available. It can be built as either an FAW.1, FAW.2, or D.3, with separate boom tanks.

There are decals for six aircraft with diagrams, and another one for which I could not find my references come the time to do the drawings (It now seems to be one included in the Frog kit). Additional decals for all three versions are still available from Model Art Decal Systems in the UK.

Due to the size and complexity of the kit (it was a real task to get the patterns completed) and the large decal sheet, it retails for Aus \$48 (about US \$25 and UK £18).

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## *Annum Horribilis!*

*from page 4*

many mistakes and problems (and asking many questions of John Chilenski and others) I now have good success with acrylic paints and I prefer to use them. Each component of my painting and finishing system should reflect this preference. Despite all my mistakes this year I feel that I have become a better modeler. I am implementing some of the things that I've been taught. I've also taught myself some things, such as better control of my airbrush. Pity I can't show you! I will exercise greater caution with new tools and techniques in the future. I'll hand Murphy his Eviction Notice, and I will finish something. Starting with the three unfinished models either staring me in the face on the workbench, or beckoning to me from their boxes on the shelf above it. How was **your** year?

## Mike Grant Decals – 1/72<sup>nd</sup> Scale Foreign Gladiators

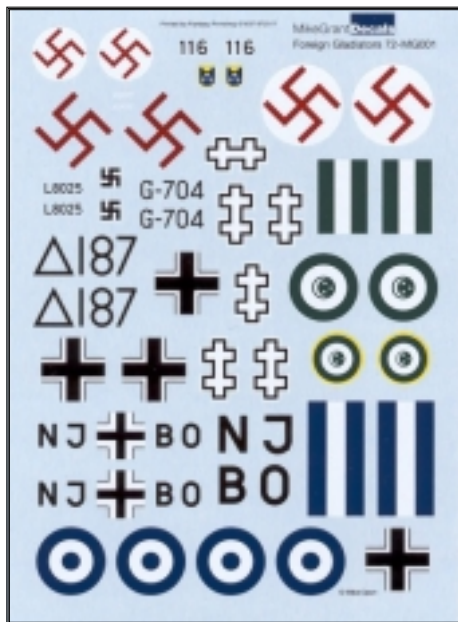
by Robert Allen

Over the past year or so, Mike Grant has built a solid reputation for his line of ALPS-printed aircraft decals. The artwork and printing on these decals has been excellent, and the subjects have been wide-ranging, from Polish Albatros D.IIIs to Idaho ANG A-10s. With his latest sheets, Calgary-based Grant has taken the next step – the 1/72<sup>nd</sup> and 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale Foreign Gladiator sheets are not ALPS-printed, but screen-printed decals printed by Fantasy Printshops. From a user's standpoint, the main advantage is that unlike the ALPS decals, where the entire sheet is covered by decal film, these are individual decals, making them much easier to apply.

The quality is excellent, with five Gloster Gladiators included on the sheet. The Gladiator is an aircraft that lends itself to exotic schemes; it was used by at least seventeen different air forces, and many of those are ones rarely covered by mainstream decal manufacturers. The choices are an ex-RAF Egyptian Mk.II; a captured Luftwaffe Mk.I, in squadron service; a Lithuanian Mk.I; a Greek Mk.I; and a Latvian Mk.I.

Previous sheets from Blue Rider, Aviation USK/Tally Ho!, and the Encore reboxing of the Heller kit have included aircraft from some of these air forces, but Grant has wisely chosen different examples from those; for example, the Latvian example is "116" rather than the familiar "114," and is one which was later used by the Soviets, giving another choice simply by replacing the Latvian swastikas with Soviet red stars. The Lithuanian example is also a different aircraft in a different scheme than other Lithuanian aircraft we've seen, being based on an operational Lithuanian

example rather than the Gloster-applied markings.



Of special interest are the Egyptian and Greek aircraft, neither of which I've previously seen offered; the Greek example in the four-color RAF shadow-shaded scheme is especially appealing. The instruction sheet is brief but functional; we're so used to FS or RLM colors being provided that we forget not everything is meticulously documented, and that we don't have an exact match for Lithuanian Olive Green. The instructions provided are in black and white, but a full color PDF file of the instructions can be found at [www.cadvision.com/mikegrant/MikeGrantDecals/Gladiator.html](http://www.cadvision.com/mikegrant/MikeGrantDecals/Gladiator.html). This is a great idea, and one that I'm sure we'll see more often in the future.

This is an excellent choice for Grant's first screen-printed sheet, and is executed to his high standards. Mike Grant Decals can be ordered from Grant's web site at [www.cadvision.com/mikegrant/MikeGrantDecals/Page1.html](http://www.cadvision.com/mikegrant/MikeGrantDecals/Page1.html).

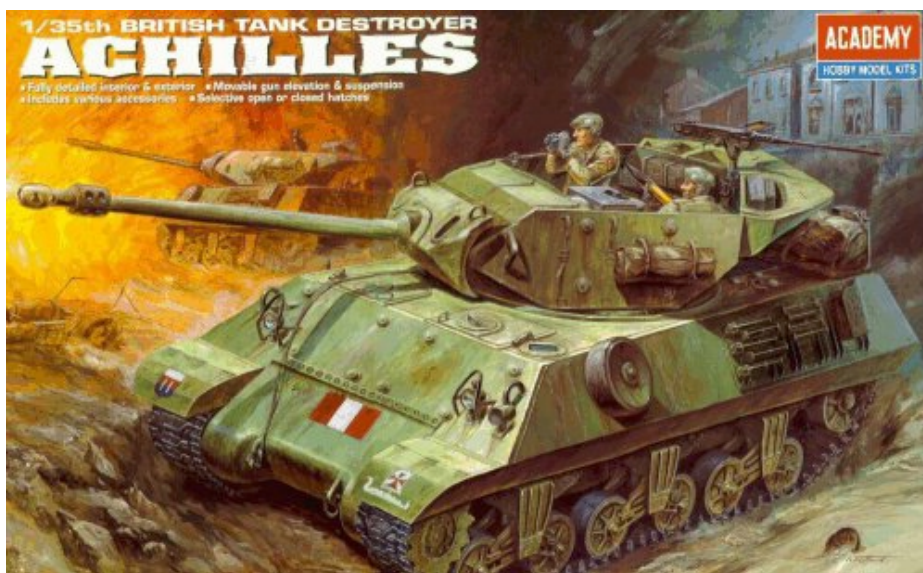
## Academy 1/35 Scale British Tank Destroyer Achilles

by Cookie Sewell, courtesy AMPS

I had seen the preliminary review on this kit from Peter Brown in the UK, and as a died-in-the-wool Sherman fan had to pick one up no matter what. I must preface things with saying that I may never build it as the Achilles, but the kit is one of the best recent plastic kits I have personally seen, and considering what's in the box is a tremendous value for the money. I won't steal any of Peter's thunder, as he has been to the IWM and Public Records Officer several times in recent weeks to check on vehicles such as this and has the latest information on it. Suffice it to say that M10 and Achilles were used as synonyms, but not on a regular basis.

The kit represents a 17-pounder conversion of the final production model of the M10 3" GMC with the "duckbill" counterweights fitted to the turret, and the rearward slanting turret rear to provide more room for the crew. It comes with a plethora of details, not all of which are accurate for this particular version, but one of the most appreciated will be a very nice set of vinyl "British style" steel chevron tracks. These are very nicely done, with the three studs on the surface, and only a small "teat" on the inner face of every 10th link or so to clean up. Academy cut a special hull top and "E" sprue for this kit, and the rest of the layout bodes very well for Sherman or just US M4 series tank fans. Some are plainly marked "Sherman series" so they would appear to have more kits planned beyond the current Achilles, M10, and M36 vehicles. The parts layout in the kit suggests that the M10 and M36 will share some sprues, as a separate engine deck with the M4A2 style louvers indicative of diesel engines are included on one of them. (Only the louvered doors, parts C19 and C20, are needed for the Achilles). Of note to engine fans is the fact

that the engine bay major components are also provided, needing only engines and radiators to complete (Note: The Tank Workshop makes an M4A2 engine bay set which should fit this model, but I am willing to bet that Model Valley, a Korean resin company that appears to have some relation to Academy, will soon have a “drop-in” engine assembly for this model).



A reasonably complete front-end interior, including the SCR-508/608 style radio set, is included with the kit. There are two different transmission covers (“Rounded” and “Sharp-nose”). They also provide the optional bogie component set which came with the M12 155mm GMC kit, which provides for either cast or welded (“spoked”) wheels and early or late track skids on the top of the bogies. The rest of the model is very nice with the glaring exception of the upper rear hull panel, which has “outlines” cast on it for mounting the tool sets. This is pretty lame considering the rest of the kit, as the concept went out of style in the early 1960s, and someone at Academy needs to get his wrist slapped for letting it go out the door on a kit of this quality. There are a few large knockout pin marks inside the turret that will have to go, but overall they are at a minimum and kept out of sight.

The decal sheet is incomplete (doing only one and a half vehicles) and in my example one item was off register. One error several people have spotted is that British crews did not store 17-pounder shells in cardboard tubes as US crews did with their ammunition. The model comes with 32 rounds stored in cardboard tubes, which are wrong for a British vehicle with the big

gun. The projectiles that come with the turret sprue seem correct, and it only takes a few seconds to see that these rounds will not fit in those tubes.

One of the best items in this kit is Sprue “H”. This is a really useful set of bits, and includes the following items: a pair of five link “extenders”, similar to those found on the old MP Models M4A4 hull, so the vinyl tracks can fit on an A4 chassis; six spare T51 smooth non-reversible shoes, with a choice of either US or UK style stowage racks; three whip antenna mounts, including one which is angled at 45 degrees; three jerry cans (one German and two US style), all with separate carrier bases provided and needing only straps to complete; two late production “dish” type M4 VVSS series wheels; and the neatest bits of all, add-ons in styrene. These amount to 21 bolt heads, 7 rivet heads, 7

studs, 15 buckles in three different styles, 10 tie-down brackets, five wing nuts, and a complete alphabet plus two number sets of 0-9 and casting marks for two foundries. (One unfortunate thing is after all this Academy doesn’t tell you what sort of numbers should go on the vehicle, or where they only indicate the mantelet should have a number attached to it.) The kit also includes Academy’s Sprue “D”, a generic Sherman sprue, which provides nice little bits, a good .50 caliber and .30 caliber machine gun, and decent pioneer tools. (If they sold this one separately, it would permit rapid upgrades to all Italeri and DML kits out there suffering from anemic tool set syndrome.)

Overall, the quality of this kit is astounding. The choice of the Achilles, until the history of the actual vehicles becomes wider known, may not be the best as it is a very small part of the US Tank Destroyer story. But if nothing else, this kit is a standard setter, and one of the best bargains on the market today.

British Tank Destroyer Achilles; 565 parts (562 in sand tan styrene, 2 in steel colored vinyl, 1 nylon string).

Price \$35

Advantages: Amazing kit with tremendous level of detail; “prepared” for after market detail additions; “H” sprue nearly worth the price of admission on its own.

Disadvantages: Choice of relatively esoteric version of this vehicle may hurt sales.

Rating: Highly Recommended.

Recommendation: For all Commonwealth armored fans and small postwar army followers, as well as all “Shermaholics.”



## Modeling the Fairey IIIF Mk IIIM in 1/72nd Scale

by Hugh Beyts, IPMS-UK FAA SIG

The basis of this model is the Contrail Fairey IIIF kit. This was an early attempt at producing a complete kit in vacuform and consists of several vacuform sheets sufficient to produce three aircraft, injection molded detail parts, plastic strut material, a decal sheet, drawings, instructions, and a copy of Profile No.44, *The Fairey IIIF*. This latter item is probably the most useful part of the entire kit.

Unfortunately the quality and accuracy of the moldings is not too good but I was determined to add an example of this famous type to my collection. The IIIF was a workhorse of both the RAF and FAA between the wars, second only to the Hart family in terms of production figures and it enabled both Fairey to survive the lean post WWI years, and the military to police the Empire.

Typical then that the type has been totally ignored by the mainstream manufacturers and even the second division teams working in resin et-al. Until Aeroclub or their like see fit to add one to their output you can either scratch build or utilize the Contrail offering. Actually there's not much difference between the two!

I used the best wing and tail components, and the fuselage closest to the IIIM I could and flogged the rest. As the three-cockpit IIIM is not a kit option it is necessary to do a little conversion work along the way but in the midst of all the other activity you barely notice. Early on it was apparent that the kit floats were not a serious option as they are woefully inaccurate but I decided to cross this bridge at a later date, reasoning that, although I really wanted a float plane version, if no suitable floats were available

I would put it on wheels and save myself a load of trouble!

### Fuselage

Armed with the *Aviation News* drawings a start was made on the fuselage. Besides altering the cockpit layout the most obvious problems are the incorrect nose profile in both elevation and plan, the coarse exterior detail, and the misalignment of the fuselage halves when offered up together. Ignoring these tribulations for the time being, a start was made on the interior detail; top and bottom longerons were added along with stringers and cockpit framing. Once the pilot and observer's seats are added, plus a floor for



the air gunner and his folding seat, little can actually be seen. Detail was limited to the pilot's instrument panel, gun breech, some side pouches in the observers cockpit for navigational equipment, and a sliding hatch in the air gunners cockpit floor along with Lewis gun magazine holders, camera and radio gear. As some of this could be added after construction it was prepared and put to one side. The interior was painted silver and the frames picked out in semi-gloss black before the two sides were glued together and once dry the area from the front of the pilots cockpit to the rear of the gunners cut away down to the top longeron. This allows the cockpits to be remodeled. I used laminations of card at the time but if I were to do it again I would either plunge mould a suitable shape and cut out the cockpits, or build it up from thin Milliput before cutting out the apertures. Coaming was added

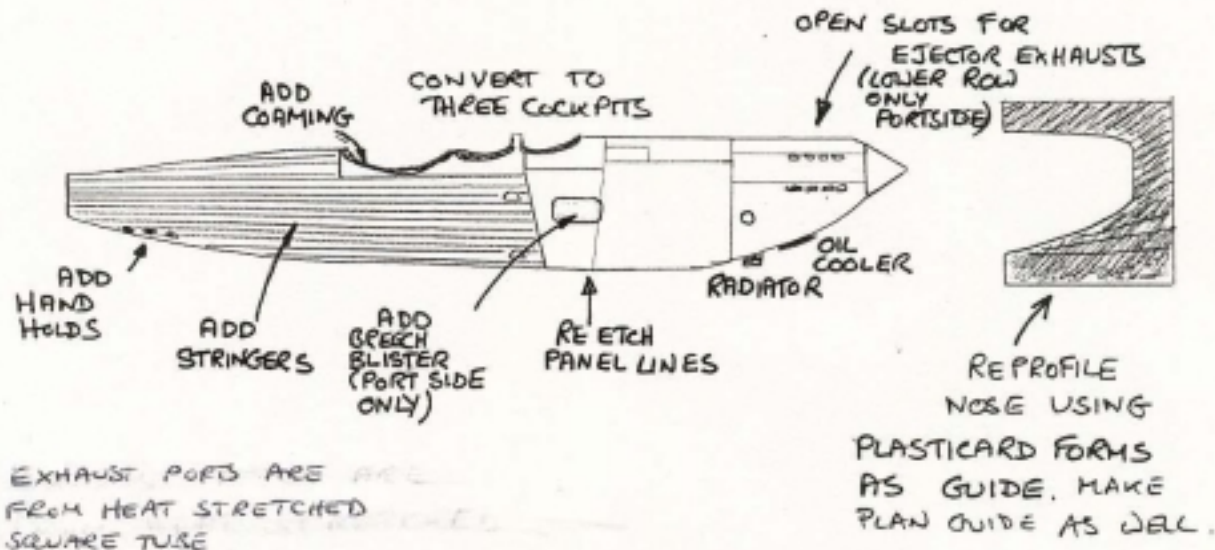
later from thin plastic rod well soaked in glue to soften it before coaxing it around the edge little by little.

Next task was to reshape the nose to capture Fairey's elegant lines, which are totally missing from the kit offering. Using the drawing side elevation and plan, nose profiles were cut in 15 thou card which were then used as gauges to shape the contours which had previously be built up with Milliput. With the new nose complete the exterior detail was sanded down and filled as necessary before adding fuselage stringers from fine strip and re-engraving the panel detail and drilling small recesses (0.3mm) to represent the fastenings. Steps and handling holes needed tidying up too. An aperture was cut under the nose for the radiator, which is supplied as lump of black plastic, so it was also cleaned up and detailed. The rear fuselage was cut down and squared up to accept the tailplane. A piece of 10 thou card was let in to form a firm base and ultimately it, the tailplane and fin were drilled to accept a plastic rod to pin them all together.

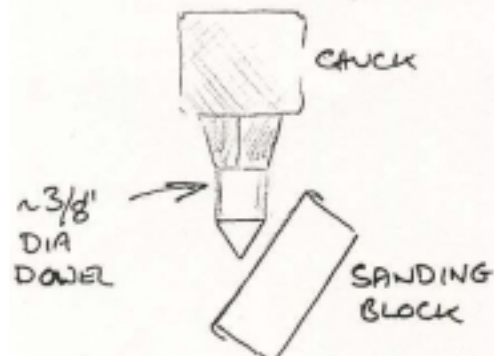
The intakes under the nose and the magneto access holes were opened up along with the exhaust ports. My intended version had ejector ports rather than pipes, included in the kit are some rather flash ridden pipes that might be usable. The bulged panel over the pilot's machine gun breech is a bit ill-defined so a new item was plunge molded from 10 thou. Gas and ejector ports were cut into it.

### Wings

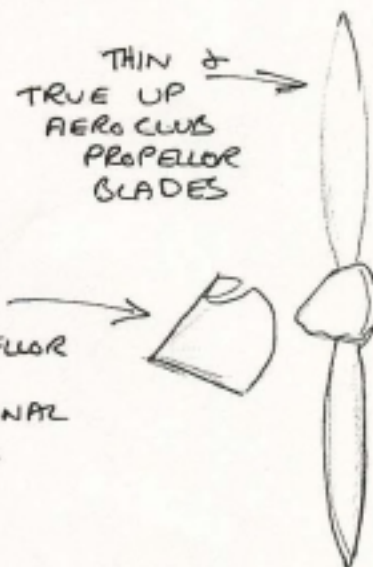
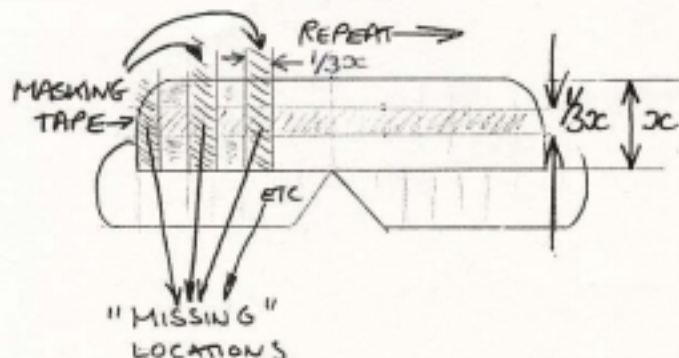
With the fuselage looking quite promising my attention turned to the wings. Some modelers advocate only using one surface here, but for my money not only is that too thin but it is too flexible, especially for tension rigging. I selected the best upper and lower wings and after cutting them out smoothed the inner surfaces for a good join. It was apparent that one lower wing was going to be too thin so some 10 thou card was cut to shape and sandwiched between the upper and lower pieces. The surface detail on the wings leaves a bit to

FUSELAGEPLUNGE MOULD NEW SPINNER

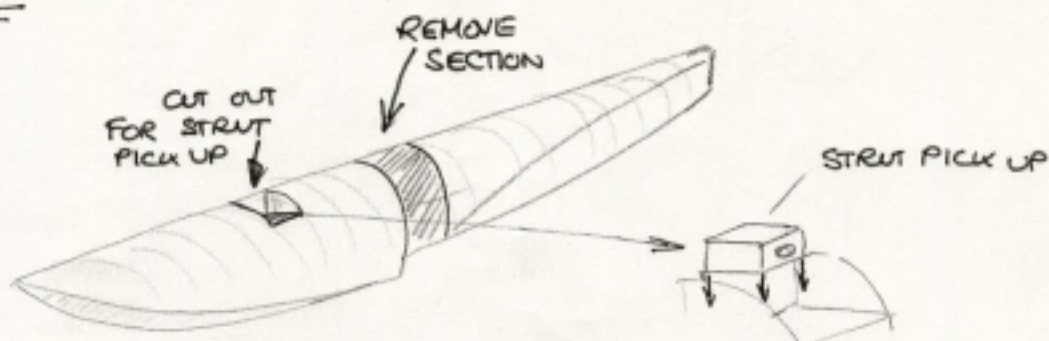
SPIN SOME DOWEL IN A CHUCK & SHAPE WITH SANDPAPER



CUT RESULTING PLUNGE MOULDED FORM DOWN TO SIZE, CUT SLOTS FOR PROPELLOR BLADES, SLIDE OVER ORIGINAL AEROCUBS ITEM

CHECKERBOARD MARKINGS

- ① PAINT FIN & TAILPLANE WHITE
- ② MASK WITH STRIP 1/3 RD CHORD OF TAIL PLANE
- ③ PAINT RED, PAINT SOME CLEAR DECAL RED AT SAME TIME
- ④ REMOVE MASKING TAPE, ADD SQUARES OF RED DECAL AT "MISSING" LOCATIONS

FLOATS

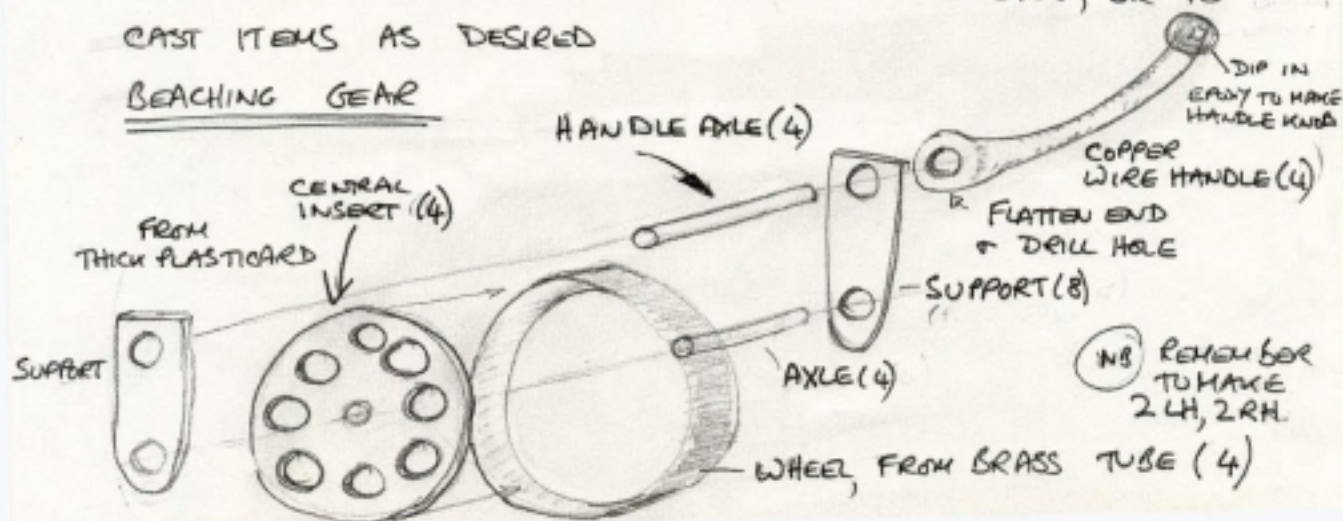
COVER PORT + STARBOARD HALVES OF FROG SWORDFISH

- FLAT WITH LAYERS OF:
- ① COPYDEX
  - ② COPYDEX + SPRINKLE WITH SANDUST
  - ③ STIFFEN WITH WIRES

BUILD UP ABOUT 5 COATS. REMOVE RESULTING SHELLS & FILL WITH PLASTIC PADDING, WHEN DRY REMOVE RESULTING FLOAT HALVES. TACK TOGETHER, CUT OUT SECTIONS AS ABOVE. SEPERATE + GWE FRONT + REAR HALVES OF EACH SIDE TOGETHER.

REDUCE WIDTH BY SANDING INNER FACES ON FLAT SURFACE, ADD STRUT PICKUPUP, AND ETCH SURFACE DETAIL.

PLACE HALVES FLAT SIDE DOWN ON SMOOTH (GLASS) SURFACE. SURROUND WITH LEGO BRICKS + MAKE SILICON RUBBER MOULD. CAST AS MANY RESIN FLOATS AS DESIRED FROM THIS. ADD SURFACE DETAIL EITHER TO MASTER, OR TO CAST ITEMS AS DESIRED

BEACHING GEAR



be desired and the rib tapes are engraved rather than raised so the wing surfaces were tidied up and the trailing edges thinned down before adding the tapes from stretched 20 thou strips. Then the flap and aileron detail was re-engraved. The tailplane and fin were similarly treated. After carefully checking that the lower and upper wings were matched for span the holes for the struts were carefully marked out and drilled as were the rigging holes, these latter with the smallest drill I had which was 0.3mm. A hole was then drilled into the wing roots to accept a suitable gauge wire, which slid into a brass tube epoxied through the fuselage. This ensured a strong joint and also prevents the entire load from being carried by the thin fuselage walls. With resin cast floats this model is heavy when complete!

The lower wings were now epoxied in place, ensuring they were square and had the correct dihedral and incidence. The next task was build a jig to hold the top wing in place while the struts were shaped from brass struts material. My current method involves a jig built from Meccano (see *Scale Models* Vol 129, No.3. p50). Once I was happy with the wing struts I turned my attention to the floats. Note that Contrail's wing gap of 1-3/16" is a tad too much, 7/8" is nearer!

#### Floats

The kit floats bear little resemblance to the real thing and attempts to alter them with Milliput proved futile. Eventually after several false starts I found that a Frog Swordfish float was the right shape, only too large, so a copy was made by coating each half of the float in alternate layers of copydex and sawdust and a few stiffening wires. From these female molds two solid half-floats were molded in plastic padding. These were then cut to length and slimmed down to the right size and cut outs made for the front strut pick up point. From the two male moulds a silicon female was cast which was then used to produce resin components. The ribbing was added after the halves were epoxied together as I was

uncertain if I could master such techniques. The central hatches are best added afterwards to avoid unnecessary seams. Although such methods are initially quite daunting the results were very pleasing and I am very grateful to those club members who offered sound advice in this part of the project.



#### Final Assembly

With the completion of the floats another small jig was constructed to hold them and the fuselage while the struts were cut. The forward vee is soldered from brass; the aft oleos are Contrail airfoil section drilled to take wire at both ends. The necessary holes in floats and fuselage were drilled. The main components were now prepared for painting. Careful thought was applied to the best sequence of masking, painting, marking, and assembling. I find that by writing down a running order problems can be foreseen, and the sequence altered until the best approach can be evaluated. The fuselage was painted grey, followed by the red stripe, then silver, and the nose buffed to represent metal paneling before being placed in the wing jig to have the previously painted top wing added. The whole was then removed while the tailplane was attached. It and the fin and rudder were carefully masked to produce the checkerboard markings. The diagram shows how.

The rigging was now added. I like to tension rig with invisible mending thread.

It passes right through the wings and is super glued in place. The ends are cut off with a sharp blade as close as possible to the wing surface. Once complete the paint is made good and the markings added top and bottom. The model was now placed in the second jig to attach the floats. All struts were glued with slow setting epoxy for strength; these floats are heavy! The details were now added. The navigation lamps and flare holders came from Airfix Bulldog kits; other detail is from scratch. The propeller is an Aeroclub item suitable thinned and cleaned up. The undernourished spinner was covered with a new plunge-molded item. Finally the beaching gear, made as in the diagram, was added. As the model rests on six points it is important to ensure there is no daylight under any of them. To

this end the two outer wheels were first pinned and glued then the inners were Superglued in situ while the model rested on its base.

This model was started a few years ago and then suspended while I found out ways to surmount various problems. Along the way I've learnt a lot so hopefully if and when I start a Fairey Seal it won't be so difficult or take quite as long!

My thanks to all those modelers who have assisted with this model by offering advice and tips along the way. Don't forget Contrail either - many of their kits have never been duplicated despite the fact that they represent important types. While the quality is not up to current standards they can be built into attractive models if the will is there.

#### References

*Aeroplane Monthly*, Various but particularly March, May, and June 1994  
*Fairey Aircraft Since 1915*, H.R. Taylor  
*The British Bomber*, F. Mason  
*The Fairey IIIIF*, Profile #44, F. Mason

## IPMS Seattle 2002 Membership Renewal

2002 is here, and it is dues time again. As is our usual practice, a renewal form was included with the December newsletter and is again included in the January newsletter.

Everyone on the current (2001) mailing list will receive the January newsletter, but those who have not renewed will have a "Last Issue" note on the mailing envelope. If you do not renew prior to the mailing of the February newsletter, you will not receive that or subsequent issues.

Dues are **\$24.00**, make checks payable to IPMS Seattle, and mail it to;

**IPMS Seattle  
16510 NE 99<sup>th</sup> St.  
Redmond, WA 98052**

### *IPMS SEATTLE 2002 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM*

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. Area Code (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

## Meeting Reminder

## Saturday, January 12

## 10 AM - 1 PM

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

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

