

Scale Views

The newsletter of the Australian Plastic Modellers Association – Issue 5 2022

ABOUT SCALE VIEWS

Editor: Bill Renfrew **Assistant: David Muir**

Scale Views appears as a supplement to **APMA**, the Association's quarterly magazine. Contributions for inclusion in the magazine and newsletter are welcome from any and all members.

Submissions do not have to be camera ready; the Editorial team are happy to assist with organising and formatting text and drawings based on your drafts.

To submit material for inclusion in *Scale Views* contact the staff at apma.newsletter@gmail.com, see us at a meeting, contact Bill via his personal e-mail wjrenfrew@gmail.com or send correspondence to the Secretary, **PO Box 464, Cremorne, NSW 2090.**

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the members or committee of the Australian Plastic Modellers Association or of the Newsletter Editorial team.

APMA MEETINGS

APMA meets monthly (usually on the second Saturday) at Gladesville Sporties Club, 181A Ryde Road, Gladesville NSW

For meeting details visit the APMA website at: <http://apma.org.au>

NEXT MEETING: January 14th @ Noon

2023 Committee

<u>President</u> –	Simon Wolff
<u>Vice President</u> –	Phil Wordsworth
<u>Secretary</u> –	James Argæt
<u>Treasurer</u> –	Paul Green
<u>5th Committeeman</u> –	Warren Evans

EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS

Welcome to the 'bonus' last APMA Newsletter for 2022. This marks the end of my time at the Assistant Editor's keyboard. I would like to thank all those who have contributed over the last few years: without their generosity the Newsletter would have been a much smaller and duller place.

Thanks are also due to the 2022 Committee and especially to Lindsay Charman for his dedication and leadership as the President. Someone once described leading a volunteer organisation as being akin to pinning amoebas to a tree; Lindsay has managed to do it well and with great aplomb.

Congratulations to the new Committee on their election during the December meeting. They are an excellent mix of "old hands" with experience in the Committee game and some very welcome fresh faces. We wish them well, confident that they have the skills and nous to maintain and grow the Association.

David M

UPCOMING SHOWS

The following is a shortlist of known upcoming shows of interest in Australia:

IPMA 2023 NSW Scale Model Show – 13th and 14th May, Illawarra Sports Stadium, NSW

Hunter Valley Air Show – 25th & 26th March, Cessnock Airport, NSW

Australian International Air Show – 3rd – 5th March, Avalon Airport, VIC

Please check the dates online closer to the show date, to be certain. Also, if you are aware of any upcoming shows, whether model shows or of interest to modellers, do let us know.

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BOOK REVIEWS

COLOUR CONUNDRUM COMPENDIUM No 1

By Paul Lucas Illustrations by Mark Rolfe and Jan Polc
Scale Aircraft Modelling / Guideline Publications
Reviewed by Michael M Robinson



SAM readers will be familiar with Paul Lucas's series of articles under the 'Colour Conundrum' banner that followed on from the late Ian Huntley's 'Column' which ran in SAM between 1978 and 1994. First appearing in September 2001 as an occasional series, 'CC' was reintroduced as a monthly series in 2015 and has been running regularly ever since. As the name suggests the focus of each issue is an unusual aspect of colours and markings, usually (but not exclusively) those adopted by the RAF.

The 'CCs' draw heavily on Lucas's research in the British archives at Kew (National), Yeovilton (RN), Hendon (RAF) and Lambeth (IWM). Some subjects have appeared more than once when they are too large for a single article and/or Lucas's ongoing research turns up some significant new information. This Compendium reproduces a wide ranging group of articles with each group sharing a common subject or theme. Thus it includes:

- Pre WW1 and RFC colours and markings (4 articles)
- Middle East colours in WW2 (2 articles)
- Deep Sky Blue Mystery (2 articles)
- Malta Spitfires (6 articles)
- Grey Green and Sky (3 articles)
- FAA Midnight Blue and Phantom finishes (2 articles)

Each article is reproduced just as it appeared in SAM, i.e. with the same layout, text and illustrations. They fill 77 of this Compendium's 84 pages, the rest being given over to the cover (1), advertisements (3), a contents page (1), an introduction (1) and lastly one page updating the articles. The layout follows SAM's standard format with 3 column text illustrated with coloured side profiles and plan views and, very occasionally, some small black and white period photographs. Each article includes a small colour key giving a Vallejo paint reference for the illustrated colours.

The plans and elevations prepared by Mark Rolfe and Jan Polc and are all in the same style, i.e. with fine linework and solid colour infills without any attempt to show weathering or damage. They are generally reproduced to a 'fit-the-page' scale which makes for very clear, easily interpreted images. Some are simple reproductions of the official colour scheme and marking requirements, most are based on (and reference) known airframes. Given the authors scholarly approach to each topic it is probably safe to assume that they are acceptably accurate. However, in the absence of any in period images (on which most were presumably based) it is impossible to verify their accuracy.

Paul Lucas's writing style is, of necessity, fairly dry to match the documented and fact based material he is presenting. The articles are generally well structured with any new or speculative material or interpretations clearly identified and explained. Being primarily a reference source the articles are not exactly light reading and require a degree of concentration, some thought and a bit of effort on the reader's part to fully understand what he is saying. I found it easiest to absorb the ideas by reading just one article at a time and to do so over a couple of sessions.

Much of the material referenced by Lucas has never been published before and so brings new facts to light, and some of his assertions contradict the 'conventional wisdom' and are thus controversial with some modellers. Lucas's work is based strongly in documented evidence and so he quite rightly stands his ground using such facts. And he does so in the face of some at times irrational and ill formed opinions. Indeed a couple of subjects were the subject of so much bloody minded and ignorant aggression on Britmodeller that Lucas stopped posting. However, he has clearly done his homework and is arguably the pre-eminent expert in the field of British military aircraft colours at the moment.

In this context the page of text updating the articles is useful and its inclusion may explain why the author chose to omit the other useful aspect of the series in SAM, i.e. the feedback and the more rational discussion from its readers in response to his work. While the responses are at times ill-informed and/or prejudiced in favour of long held myths some of the feedback has helped inform and add to the debate and has helped clarify his arguments. Perhaps some of them will appear in subsequent Compendiums.

Unless you have saved them at the time they were published it is not easy to build a collection of Paul Lucas's writings. The magazine issues are long out of print and difficult to find so this Compendium is now the

only practical way of accessing his work. The series has been running long enough to provide ample fodder for many more of these Compendiums and it is to be hoped that this being labelled 'No1' means it is the precursor to further volumes similar to this excellent first effort. Highly recommended for anyone with any interest in RAF colour schemes of any period.

THE NORTH AMERICAN P-51D/K Including the P-51H & XP-51F, G & J

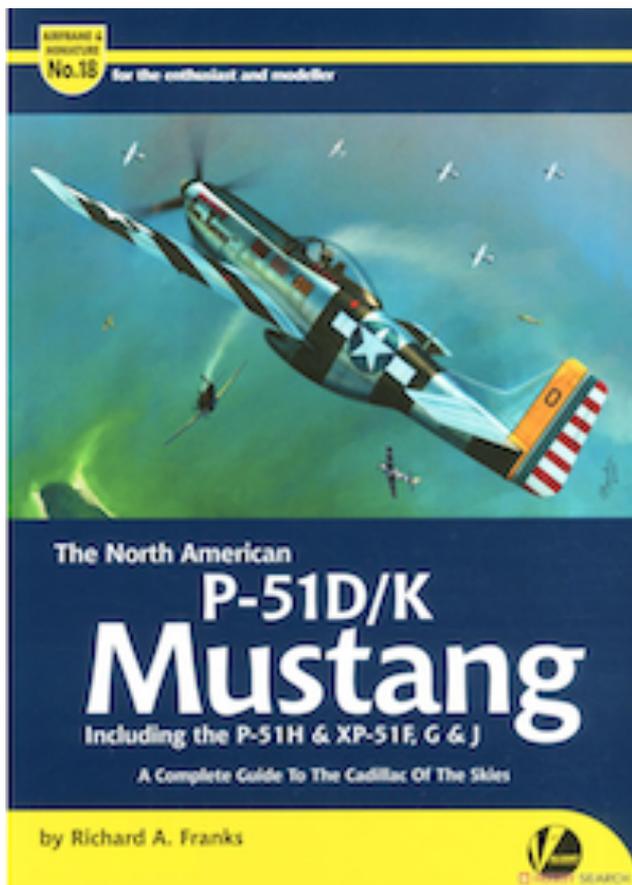
A Complete Guide to the Cadillac of the Skies

By Richard A. Franks

Valiant Wings Publishing Ltd, Airframe & Miniature No 18

Reviewed by David Muir

Declaration of Interest: the reviewer is the author of 'Southern Cross Mustangs' which covers the Australian and New Zealand military and civilian Mustangs in detail and has been widely acknowledged as the definitive work on these aircraft.



First the simple stuff. This A4 sized soft bound volume runs to some 272 pages, all printed on middle weight calendared semi-gloss paper with thin cardstock covers. Following the structure established for the Airframe and Miniatures series the first section – some 112 pages – deals with a long preface (42 pages), the evolution of the D/K (13 pages), the evolution of the PR, Trainer and projected variants (4 pages) and Camouflage and Marking profiles (about 42 pages).

The second section has a long 78 page evaluation of some of the available kits and build notes using a range of makers kits in a variety of scales and then 56 pages of

photos and diagrams extracted from the maintenance and erection manuals with new isometrics highlighting the differences between the production batches and the modifications made while it was in service. The volume ends with a list of the known kits (5 pages), accessories (6 pages), decals (8 pages) and a 2 page bibliography.

The number of different users and their longevity in military service has meant that the P-51-D/K Mustang has been a popular subject both for kits and for books. With a couple of notable niches that have yet to be explored there is not a lot of opportunity for new material to be unearthed. Hence there is little new to be found in this volume. It's value therefore depends entirely on it bringing together the history and technical stories in a way that corrects, clarifies and presents the material in a way that makes it accessible to its intended audience, i.e. modellers.

Mindful of this the structure seems to be confusingly disjointed. For example the various military operators are covered in the preface, again in the evolution chapters, once again in the chapter on camouflage and markings and lastly in passing mentions within the detail diagrams at the back of the book. This is inefficient and very frustrating.

My particular interest is the Mustangs that were owned and/or operated by Australia and New Zealand so I looked at these parts with some knowledge of these aircraft. I confess that I came away somewhat disappointed. Given that Australia was the only "foreign" manufacturer of the type it was surprising to see the production history confined to just a page and a half of actual text, seven line drawings and two well-known and very over used photos. Digging deeper there are seven isometrics of the CAC built airframes and half a page of text (and again, three over used images) covering the wide variety of RAAF markings.

The problem with such brevity is that the content needs to be accurate for it to be useful and in relation to the RAAF and RNZAF it is over simplified and has many errors of fact. It is true that some CAC Mustangs were painted overall but contrary to Frank's assertion most were in bare metal with painted wings. Curiously there is no mention of the 80 airframes that did not have filled wings. Similarly he omits any reference to the various different patterns covered by the RAF's Day Fighter camouflage and (worse yet in my mind) he perpetuates the long disproved myth that RAF upper wing roundels were 40" in diameter.

There are numerous other examples of errors and omissions within the RAAF, RNZAF portions and the very limited Australian civilian coverage. One curious omission is any reference to *Southern Cross Mustangs* in the bibliography despite some of the details and terms clearly coming from *SCM* or from online references quoting it.

Contrary to its subtitle this work is far from 'complete'. There is only a passing mention of the target towing systems used by the USAAF and none of those used by the RCAF or those devised by the RAAF and used by both them and the RNZAF. While recognising the civilian

aircraft are a vast subject worthy of a book in their own right, there is no mention of the subsequent career of the many D/Ks in civilian hands. An outline of the typical modifications found on the civilian post war airframes, eg K to D type props, second seats, the racers would have helped complete the story.

The extent of the omissions and the many errors mean that I struggle to trust this book and (unlike some other online reviewers) cannot recommend it as a reliable reference. *Review copy kindly provided by Platypus Publications.*

KIT AND PRODUCT REVIEWS

FSC DUJIN CAUDRONS

FSC Dujin kit FSC 020 (C.461) in 1/72

FSC Dujin kit FSC 023 (C.714 R) in 1/72

FSC Dujin kit FSC 025 (C.430 Rafale) in 1/72

Reviewed by Ben Courreges



Jean Pierre Dujin was a pioneer in the resin kit market back on the 1970s, specialising exclusively in 1/72 scale and mainly in French aircraft. His output was prolific: he mastered and marketed well over 300 kits under his FSC Dujin branding. By current standards these were basic and quite crude and they developed a reputation for being, to be polite, challenging to assemble. Nonetheless his kits were (and in many cases still are) the only kits available for many of his chosen subjects and with time and experience the quality of FSC Dujin products gradually increased.

With Jean Pierre's passing in March 2010 the availability of FSC Dujin products soon dried up. With the approval of his family an association of French modellers known as the JFR Team began to reissue FSC Dujin kits using his refurbished masters. As with the originals these kits are produced in small numbers and availability fluctuates.

There are a number of Caudron racing and record breaking aircraft in the range including the C.362, C.366, C.430, C.450, C.460, C.461, C.466, C.560, C.561, C.690, C.712, C.714R, C.720 and C.860 plus a couple of C.800 gliders. Having developed a taste for small French racers via Adrien Roy and SBS's kits I purchased these three to fill in some gaps in my slowly growing collection.

THE KITS

All three have much in common so I will deal with them as a group first then review the aspects unique to each kit. The kits are conventionally engineered with vertically split fuselages, single piece wings and tailplanes. Casting is via a two part mould with the parts connected by a thin wafer of resin. External detailing is by way of fine recessed lines for both panel and control surfaces. As with some of the resin parts (eg flaps and wings) the kits share a very thin and very soft brass PE sheet with items such as UC doors, instrument panels, seats, seatbelts and the like. Duplicates of the vac-formed canopies are included, taking some of the risk and most of the cursing out of the glazing process.

All have bubbles in their resin parts; only the number and size varies. Most are relatively benign, being either small and/or well buried in the thicker areas. But some are not and occur just where they are a real pest such as in the thin parts of wings and tails. The majority can be spotted when held up to a strong light source; dealing with them before assembly saves a lot of hassle down the track. My favourite procedure is to open them up with a scalpel tip then back fill with Milliput as, unlike CA, this sands at roughly the same rate as the resin.

Separating the parts from their wafers is no great issue – a sharp knife makes short work of the task. However, because the thickness of the wafer varies across the sheet the fuselage mating surfaces are not dead flat and getting them to be so is not so easy. The fuselages of the C.430 and C.461 are hollowed out which helps; half an hour with a moto tool hollowing the C.714R to match is worth doing. Like older style short run kits there are no alignment pegs or tabs. Adding your own holes and pegs is pretty much essential and lots of test fitting and adjusting is needed before you even think of applying glue.

The kits (and most of the other Dujin Caudrons) share the same A4 sheet of instructions in French for dealing with the PE sheet. It gives a part map, guidance as to which bits are intended for which kits, very brief painting notes (and acknowledgement that the interior colours are not confirmed: a light grey is suggested) along with templates to cut the supplied PE radiator material to size for each airframe. The other A4 sheet provides a potted history, a photographic parts map and a list of instructions about painting and assembling the parts, but no diagrams.

Another concern common to these kits is the fitting of the tailplane and elevators. Rather than try to carve a slot in the fin the safest course is to split the empennage into two, sand and adjust the root to fit and glue them to two pins inserted through the fin. This is easier as it can be done in advance on the C.461 and C.430 which have a single piece rudder and fin attached to their port fuselages but harder on the C.714R which has them split. Tolerances are extremely tight so this needs corresponding precision.

Turning now to the individual kits... first the C.461. This is an interesting comparison with the similar and excellent SBS C.561. There are a couple of awkward bubbles but the surfaces are nicely smooth. The C.461 had long stringers down its flanks that are represented here by recessed lines. These need to be filled, preferably with fine wire, and the subtle stretched fabric contours built up with thin layers of sprayed primer and gentle sanding.

It has a retracting main undercarriage and its wheel wells needed careful cleaning out to get rid of some lumps where the moulds are failing. While the folded PE u/c doors are nice the legs themselves are resin and fragile, especially once they are cleaned of the remnants of their wafers. I did not trust them to last through the build process let alone while on display and so I ordered and fitted a pair of SBS's excellent lost wax cast brass legs as used in their C.460 and C.561 kits of the same scale.

FSC Dujin provide a small decal sheet for the titling on the tail and race numbers for the fuselage but no advice as to the locations for the other four race numbers. Coupe Deutsche de la Meurthe racers usually have them under their wings which accounts for another two but I have not been able to confirm this or their exact location or indeed if the remaining pair are supposed to go above the wings.

Second, the C.714R. Despite having a significantly bigger fuselage this shares its wing - and defects - with the C.461. Some very delicate grinding with a rotary engraving tool is again needed in the wells and in my case a huge bubble in the flap required surgery. The undercarriage legs are again in resin and structurally

inadequate for their purpose so another pair of SBS brass legs was substituted.

This one is unique in having a third instruction sheet which shows where the decals are supposed to go. Confusingly the box art shows the aircraft in an extremely dark/near black blue; this sheet shows it in a lighter shade. Either way the lettering decals are provided twice and the rudder striping once. Like its sisters further research is required but be warned colour data is hard to find for these racers.

Finally, the C.430. It can be built in either single or two seat form and decals are supplied for two versions: the blue with red trim for F-AMVB and F-AMVA and red with white trim for F-AMVB alone. No guidance is given for the placement of the decals apart from the box art side view of F-AMVB in red trimmed blue. Mine has some nasty bubbles on the flaps and tailplanes and a plentiful crop of lumps and pits across its wings. Otherwise the surface finish is again reasonable although the aileron outlines are very faint and in need of careful re-scribing. I say careful because there is some beautifully subtle fabric depicted on the ailerons and this needs to be preserved at all costs. There is at least some internal framing in the cockpit(s) that is absent from the other two kits.

The provision of PE is a step forward for this brand and allays some of the issues with their original range. All three require some careful surgery and the usual tedious trial fitting that is common in short run resin kits, so they will not be for everyone. While they are nowhere near the standard of the acknowledged industry benchmark in SBS, they are unobtainable elsewhere and thus very welcome.

BERNARD S74 Prototype No 2

Adrien Roy Kit in 1/72 scale

Reviewed by David Muir

Société des Avions Bernard rue Villot La Courneuve (Seine)



"Bernard" type S 74 prototype n° 2

moteur Gnome & Dhone Titan major 7Kbs 280 cv 1939

Echelle: 1/72

conception - réalisation: **Adrien Roy**

Back in 1919 when I bought copies of Adrien Roy's first two short run kits I noted that, while not perfect the kits (a Farman F370 and F380) were a remarkably good first effort. While they required a bit of work they were commendably accurate, a lot of fun to build and –

especially for resin kits – relatively cheap. Since then he has expanded the range to include three Bernard Schneider Cup racers (HV-40, -41 and -42), and several Bernard land planes (Type 20C.1, S.72, S.74 C1) and this one, the second prototype S.74. Each release has been marked by a step forward in their engineering, fit and finesse. Gone are any bubbles and the slightly wobbly panel lines that occasionally occurred in the Farmans.

Like its predecessors his S74 is a relatively simple kit with just 23 parts; 21 in resin plus two vacforms for the windscreen. The provision of the spare windscreen is a nice touch as is a resin master with which to make your own...just in case you stuff up **both** of the supplied vacforms. The fuselage is split vertically; the interior has basic framing augmented with a control stick, rudder bar and instrument panel and binnacle, all supplied in resin. The fit of the two halves, aided by the alignment pins is excellent, as is the fit of the one piece wing. More pins help to accurately locate the tailplanes and undercarriage. The finish is equally good with subtle rivet and fabric detailing where appropriate and cleanly scribed panel lines.

The instructions are entirely in French but are simple and easy to translate using one of the online programmes. They give a very brief history, some notes on the interior (of which little is known) and descriptions of its military and civilian livery. Overleaf is a simple three view drawing of the spectacular white and red civilian 'sunburst' scheme when it was registered as F-ARQK; you have to mask and paint the trim (fun!), the regos are provided as decals.

The main legs and tail skid, while admirably to scale, may be OK but look fragile and are worth replacing with metal; both are simple shapes that are easily reproduced with wire and styrene. The engine needs some pushrods and wires but otherwise this one needs minimal extra work.

Good quality, pretty, fun and cheap so **RECOMMENDED**

INFINI EASYCUTTING MATS

Infini Models Easycutting mats Type A IT-3001V1 for straight lines and rectangles

Type B IT-3002V1 for circles, squares and 27° slants

Type C IT-3003V1 for large (100 to 500mm) radius arcs

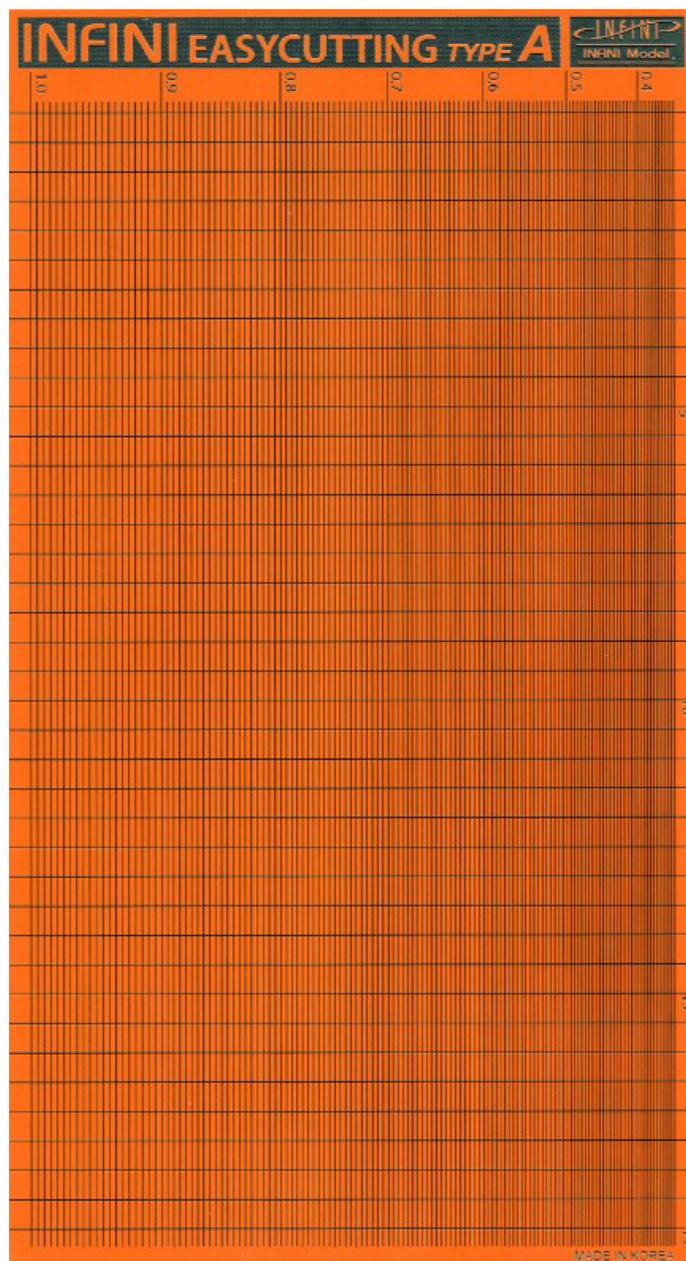
Type D IT-3004V1 for 45° and 60° slants and hexagons

Reviewed by David Muir

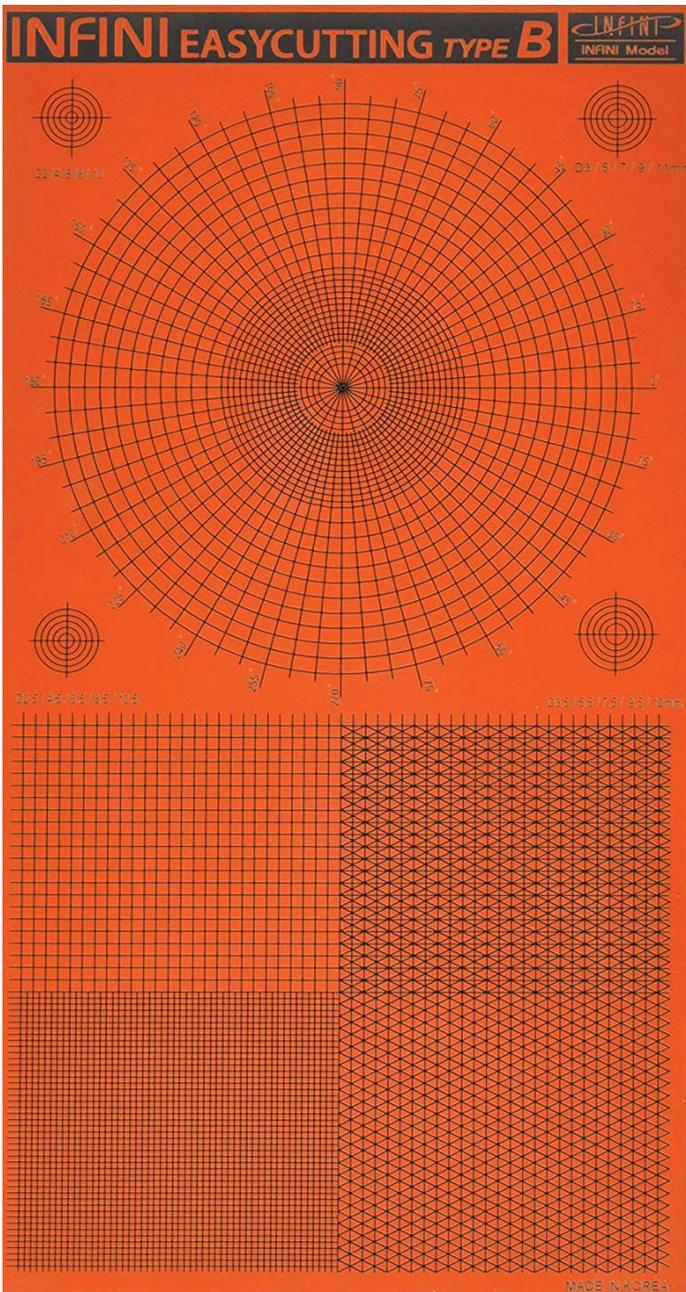
Very occasionally a tool appears that changes what was a difficult task into something easy and straight forward. These cutting mats have the added bonus of being both economical and simple to use. All four are made from 3mm black acrylic sheet coated in orange on one face. Each Type has a finely engraved pattern of lines on that face that allow you to quickly and accurately cut masking tape to size and shape. To use them you simply apply a strip of tape over the appropriate portion and then use the engraved grooves to guide your knife. Hey presto:

accurate - and equally important - repeatable strips and shapes ready to mask your model.

Type A is divided with grooves at 5mm intervals along one side and multiple grooves at right angles at 0.4mm, 0.5mm, 0.6mm, 0.7mm, 0.8mm, 0.9mm and 1mm spacings.



Type B has grooves for circles in 0.5mm intervals from 2mm to 12mm, 1mm intervals to 40mm diameter and 2mm from there to 95mm with radials at 5° intervals plus 1mm and 2mm square grids and 27° slants.



Type C has grooves for circles and radials with larger radii, Type D has them for variations on 45° and 60° grids.

Both A and B types are the most versatile of the four mats; they have obvious applications in cutting masking for aircraft cheat lines, car striping, the lining of ship hulls and the like. The dimensions on the Type C mat are a little too large for most subjects in 'our' scales. Type D is clearly great for anything with hexagons but is otherwise of limited use outside of that somewhat narrow niche.

Each matt is roughly 120 x 115mm with a grooved surface that is a few millimeters smaller all round. The grooves are deep enough to guide your scalpel tip without much pressure so they should last a lifetime of modelling and at under \$20 each they are a bargain. Maintenance is a snap: just give them an occasional wipe down with mild soap or (after testing) a mild solvent such as methylated spirits.

Brilliant answer to a difficult problem so RECOMMENDED.

MILES M.5 & M.5A SPARROWHAWK

SBS Model Kits in 1/72 scale
 SBS7030 M.5 Kings Cup 1935
 SBS7031 M.5A Schlesinger Race 1936
 Reviewed by S. F. Egerton



Designed by Fredrick George Miles and built by Phillips & Powis Aircraft (Reading) Ltd, the M.5 was built up from modified M.2 Hawk parts and featured a single seat in a shorter fuselage with lowered seating and rear decking fitted to a shorter span wing. The prototype G-ADNL was followed by five M.5A variants built in 1936 with new, purpose built airframes. The differences between the two marks are mainly internal (i.e. structure and engine variations), with only a few relatively minor external changes. Intended as racers the six airframes had only limited success in either short or long distance events.

SBS keep surprising us with a steady stream of new releases, some that are well known (eg their series of Schneider Cup contenders) and some that are more obscure such as these Sparrowhawks. As is their usual practice they issued the Sparrowhawk in more than one boxing; these two have exactly the same contents apart from windscreens and decals. Each has twenty five grey and one clear resin parts augmented by twelve detail bits on a small PE fret plus an instrument panel printed on clear film and a pre-cut mask for the windscreen.

As we have come to expect from SBS everything about these kits is of the highest quality. The main fuselage and fin are engineered as one piece and simply sit over the cockpit floor that is cast integrally with the one piece wing, its centre section and root fairings. The fairings slide into recesses cast in the fuselage sides and are a perfect fit. As these are racers they are very "clean" externally but

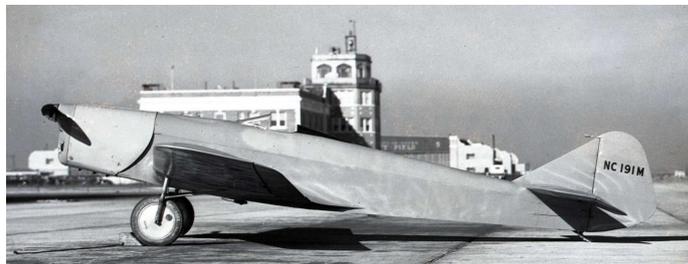
SBS provide all the details that can be seen, notably a tail skid, pitot, four minute individual stub exhausts (and a couple of spares, just in case), aileron and rudder controls and a single cockpit access door on the starboard side.

Internally things are equally complete; a seat and seat squab, three piece belts, throttle and mixture controls, joy stick, rudder bar, fuel tank (with integral throttle base and compass) and the instrument film and its PE face are all provided. Like all Gypsy Major cowlings this one has a slot in the face of the cowling which exposes the front cylinder which SBS have cast, complete with fins, as part of the main cowling. The carburettor intake on its starboard side panel is also opened up, leaving nothing much that needs attention apart from painting. You could replace the square section PE rudder control "cables" with round wire but only if you are incurably fanatical!

Building this one is very simple and straight forward; think early Frog or Airfix 1/72 monoplanes but with light years better engineering, finish and fit. The latter is such that the undercarriage legs only work one way so be careful not to confuse the left and right pieces. Painting and drying time aside I doubt that this could take even the slowest or most fastidious modeller more than a day to build.

The instructions are shared between the two boxings and are typical SBS, i.e. a two sided A5 with a parts map and assembly diagrams plus a second A5 with colour side, top and bottom views. As usual there is no guidance on the internal colours and only generic colour call outs (Silver, Matt Black, Dark Blue, Cream, etc). As none of the airframes survived into the 1960s in their Sparrowhawk form it is not surprising that there are no references to specific colours or manufacturer's paint codes.

I suspect that SBS may – repeat may – issue further boxings of this kit as there are at least four other colourful and/or interesting schemes that can be applied to Sparrowhawks. G-ADWW wore a lovely light blue livery with dark blue regos and race number 10 for a few months before being exported to America to become NC191M; at least initially it retained its overall colour. Later in its US career it was stripped of its trousers and converted to a two-seater; later still was fitted with an ugly cabin, faired in by grotesquely raised upper decking. Despite making it to 1959, it was not much photographed in this later form.



G-ADNL wore its cream and red Phillips & Powis house colours as depicted in the SBS kit for the 1935 season. Initially impressed and camouflaged when WW2 broke out it was returned to Phillips & Powis in its camouflage colours and with British civilian registration and markings.

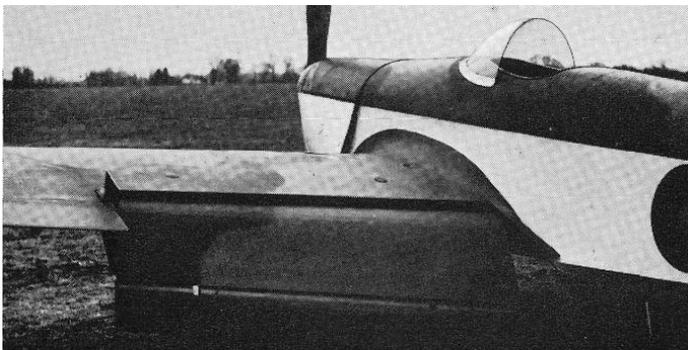
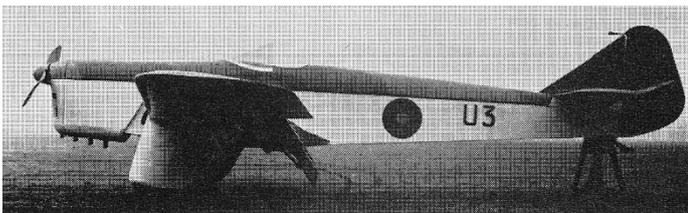


It was repainted in aluminium overall after the War and trimmed with a lightning bolt cheat line in blue along with large black race numbers (8) on both sides of its rudder and cowlings. It appeared at the 1949 National Air Races with minor changes to its trim as race No 23 with two 18" wide bands (orange forward, blue aft) painted across the upper fuselage and later still with a different race number (37) on white panels on its rudder and above its port wing.

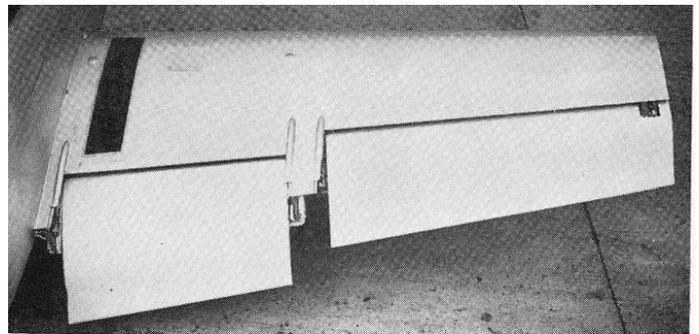
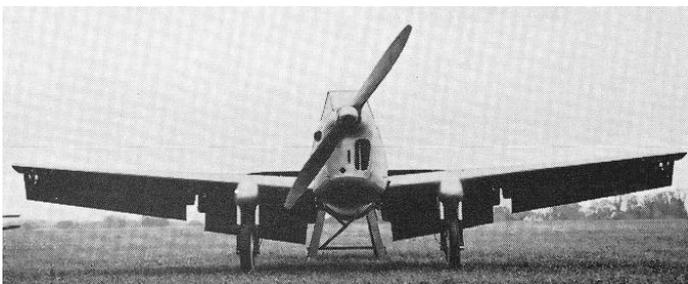
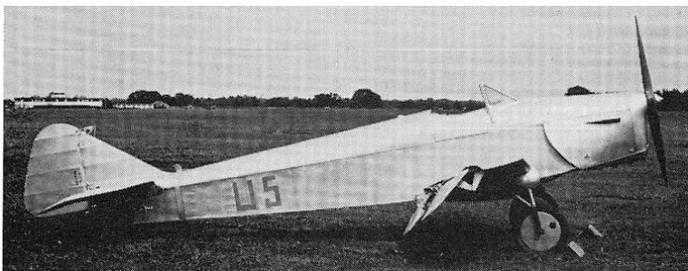




There was also another M.5A in the green/brown/yellow RAF 'prototype' scheme. Miles c/n 276 built in 1936 was used by the Royal Aircraft Establishment as U-3 on the 'B' register for flap research and was later re-registered, still in camo, as G-AGDL for use as a hack by Phillips & Powis before reverting to their cream and red 'house' colours.



Even more radical were the changes made by the RAE to an unidentified Sparrowhawk marked as U5. Painted silver overall it was fitted with clipped wings and various combinations of full span flaps and leading edge slats.



Whichever version you choose to model be alert for some of the subtle changes that were made to these airframes. Each has a slightly different windscreen and headrest sizes and shapes (some with and some without beacons), while some have the tip of their fins clipped to make way for a counterbalance for the rudder.

An elegant aircraft, colourful liveries, a well engineered kit with perfect fit and finish, trouble free assembly and a couple of conversion possibilities...what's not to like?

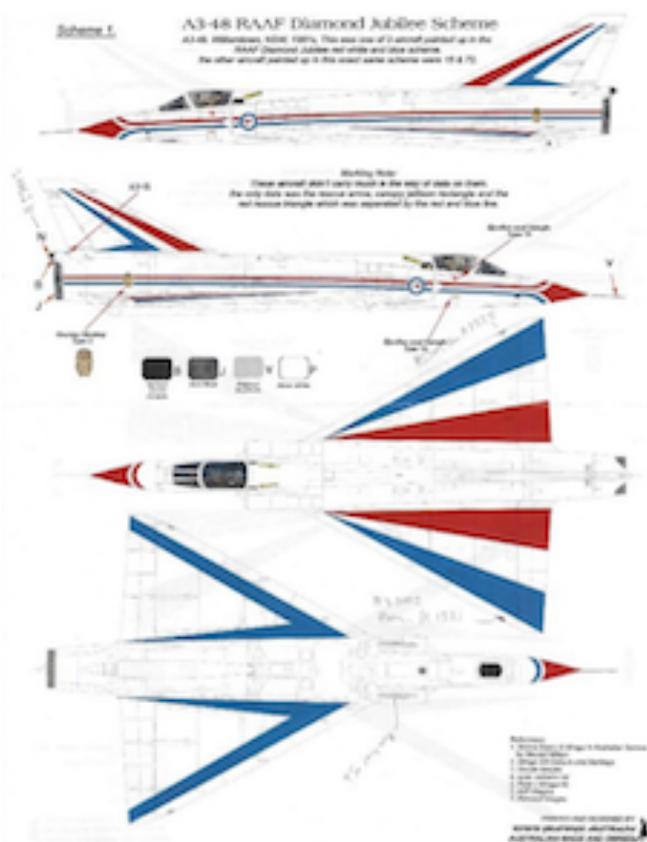
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

RAAF 77 SQUADRON DIAMOND JUBILEE MIRAGE IIIOs

Ronin Decals RDS-208 in 1/72 scale

Reviewed by Phil Wordsworth





I opted for the scheme used in the diamond jubilee celebrations with aircraft A3-15. The base kit used was the venerable Heller Mirage III kit. Despite its age and the raised panel detail it is still a great kit, although compared to the recently released Modelsvist Mirage IIIIO, it doesn't compare in the level of detail. I scratch build the cockpit and included the well detailed ejection seat from High Planes. I also did a little scratch building with the wheel wells which lacked detail. I however did not remove the raised panel lines and engrave the model.



When I saw this set of very colourful decals on the Ronin Decals website as an "extremely limited edition" I could not resist! The decal package contains decals of the three Mirage IIIIOs, painted to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the RAAF in 1981.

The aircraft was maintained and kept very clean during the airshow commemorations and I estimated that the time to engrave the plane would not add any extra value. Also I am not that good at engraving especially the rounded surfaces of the fuselage so raised panel lines stayed!

The three aircraft, A3-15, A3-48 and A3-72, were painted overall gloss white with gloss red and gloss mid blue trim applied to the fuselage, wings and tailfin, and sporting a red nose cone, (which was a dummy). The three aircraft were seen at numerous airshows around the country to celebrate the event.

After completing the building of the model it was time to paint. After painting the cockpit (NATO Black with white, red, yellow and green for the HUD and display), engine exhausts (H33 with streaks of H64 inside and silver ring H27002 and H56 on the outside of the exhaust), wheels and wheel wells (H56 and H11), the rest was relatively easy as the majority of the aircraft is white. This was done with Tamiya white primer straight from the can after masking. This gives great coverage but is satin finish at best. After curing the aircraft was brush painted with Pledge in two coats. After allowing the clear coat to dry, it was time for the decals.

In addition to this scheme, an option is given in the decal package to represent the original scheme proposed for the Jubilee applied to aircraft A3-72. This was similar to the final version but had a red and blue trim along the fin leading edge and fin cap with blue stars in the form of the Southern Cross applied across the fin rudder. This scheme, however, was short lived as it was not sufficiently visible from a distance and it looked too much like a 3 Squadron aircraft when in fact the three aircraft used for the paint scheme were from 77 Squadron!



An alternative scheme is also given to represent the three aircraft at the end of the air show commitments, when all three aircraft were returned to squadron service. They remained in the colourful scheme for most of the following year with the specially painted dummy radome replaced with the standard black operation radar containing radome and the standard black serial numbers applied to the nose gear door and fin cap.

There are not many but most are large and must be aligned. There are the two red and blue fuselage stripes, the longest from engine intake to the engine exhaust, contains the National marking. The 77 squadron's golden "Grumpy Monkey" is supplied as a separate decal. The smaller red and blue striped decal containing the area of

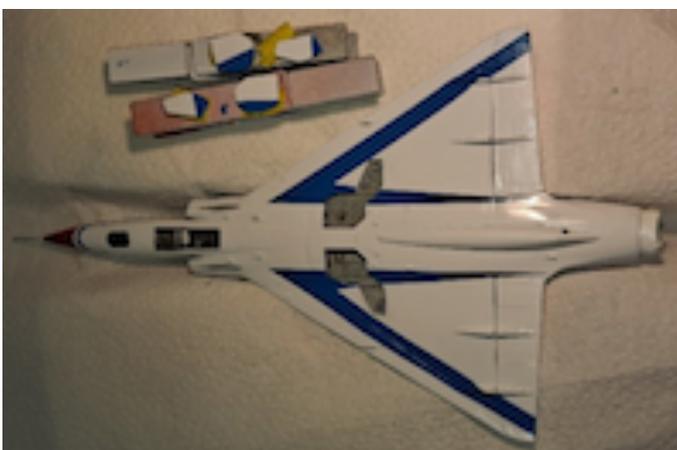
the red cone is placed between the engine intake to the front of the aircraft. This is a tricky set of decals to get the alignment correct and straight. The tail fin chevron is easily applied along with red rescue triangle, the ejection arrow decals and a small serial number on the brake chute housing. These aircraft did not carry many data decals.

The two largest sets of decals are the blue and red chevrons for the top wing surfaces and the blue only chevron on the underside. The top fits very well and was not an issue despite its large size. The bottom ones come as a single decal per wing. If this was a wheels up aircraft it would have been simple but it wasn't!



The two parts of the landing gear covers both required bits of the chevron to be added. Thinking outside the box, I thought if I placed the gear doors in the closed position and placed the decal over them and the wing at the same time I could align the chevron correctly.

I used masking tape doubled over to attach the gear doors. It was a very tricky to manoeuvre the chevron in the correct position including the now loosely attached gear doors. Once satisfied the decals were allowed to dry.



The gear doors were carefully cut to allow them to be separated from the wing with the bits of the chevron in the correct positions. Fortunately this worked! A couple more decals for the Doppler antenna and main gear door and the decals were finished!



The model was again coated in Pledge. The final assembly of the wheels, etc was done. Final painting of the nose probe and gun fairings with H56, landing lights on the wings and no weathering!! The model was finished.



The Ronin decals worked very well, even with my unusual method of applying the bottom wing chevrons. This was another colourful and unusual Mirage III/O scheme for the model cabinet. This decal sheet is highly recommended if you can get your hands on a set.

REFERENCE

Ronin Decals *RDS-208 instructions* and '*Mirage III/O Colours and Markings*' by Paul Mason and Darren Mottram

AUSTRALIAN LP2 CARRIER

International Models Asia Co Kit IMA07435 in 1/35 scale
Reviewed by Clive Ferris



Russ Wilson's International Models Asia is a professional model making company based in Hong Kong. In addition to his custom architectural modelling practice Russ also makes and sells kits, mainly of ships and AFVs. IMA's

AFV range includes full models as well as conversion and detail upgrade kits.

Out of curiosity (having bought an assembled IMA Fly Class gunboat) I purchased one of his Australian LP2 Carriers, mainly to see what his products were in like unassembled form. It arrived perfectly packed in a stout box custom made from 2mm Forex PVC foam board. One caution: the parts are tightly packed so either re-box them or take careful note of how the box is packed when you unpack as they only fit with the bits arranged one way.

This is a full kit requiring no parts from other kits. And "full" is something of an understatement, there being over 200 parts, not counting the twenty eight lengths of track. They include a comprehensive suite of tools, two Brens and a Lewis gun along with a good selection of boxes and other "hard" stowage. First impression is that the parts are commendably thin and very well detailed. The mouldings appear to be flawless with minimal flash; there were no pin holes or bubbles visible in any of the grey resin castings.

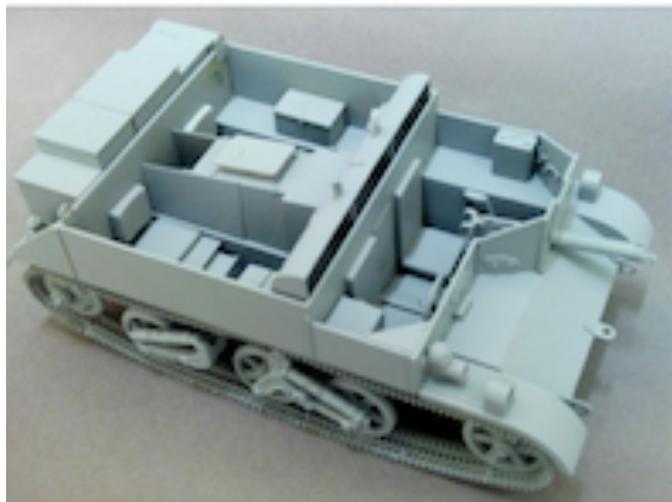
As with the Fly kit the LP2 instructions are limited in scope and a bit vague. They consist of three single sided A4 sheets with simple black and white diagrams, all focused on the hull. Apparently the suspension assembles in much the same fashion as the Tamiya Universal Carrier: IMA reference the Tamiya kit should you need more guidance and, given the complexity of the suspension bogies, having a copy of the Tamiya kit to hand is pretty much essential.

However, if you study the illustrations – some of which are reproduced here - of the finished model from the IMA Co site (www.imaco.com.hk) most modelers should have no great difficulty in putting the rest of this kit together. Ley Reynolds Carrier articles in APMA 2014/02 and 2016/02 are also essential reading and give you the history, technical data and paint schemes for the type.

The bottom of the hull is supplied as a simple resin tub incorporating some of the floor details in the driver's and gunner's compartment. The upper portion is built up using five precut acrylic pieces to form the bulkheads, fenders and sides. Laser cut from clear 0.75mm material, these incorporate tabs and slots to aid alignment and strengthen the joints. Being acrylic these parts will not respond well to styrene glues so you will need either super glue, epoxy or better yet one of the many dedicated acrylic solvents. The review example arrived with an extra bulkhead which initially caused some confusion as the front one has a hole that is not shown on the initial instruction diagram, but does appear – vaguely - on one of the later ones. Apart from that the assembly is just a matter of doing lots of dry build ups.

The fit of the acrylic plates to each other is great but both the bulkheads need a little fettling where they meet the resin tub. The front one in particular needed to have the tab along its base trimmed before it would sit correctly. The tab and slot joints will need a touch of filler on their outer face but this is simple stuff as the faces are flat with no details that might be damaged by sanding. Once the centre and rear are assembled, the front bodywork, glacis and details are easy additions using more IMA resin castings.

The kit has some thoughtful features such as an acrylic template to assist with forming and aligning the very finely moulded tracks separate from the model. These are supplied as twenty eight short, straight runs of links; as moulded they have a degree of flexibility but need to be carefully bent to fit round the wheels and sprockets and the create the sagging either side of the rollers. Russ Wilson advised that dipping the tracks in hot water and/or some gentle hot air blower work is the best way to form them.



This is an unusually (but generally well) engineered kit of an interesting if lesser known Australian subject. My only real gripe (the vagueness of the instructions) is easily addressed and thus this kit is RECOMMENDED.

MACCHI M 33

SBS Model Kit SBS7027 in 1/72 scale and
SBS 72067 Macchi M33 Beaching Gear and
SBS 72068 Macchi M33 Rigging Wire Set
Reviewed by Mike Buonarotti

As the last and fastest of the flying boat racers before the floatplanes came to totally dominate the Schneider Trophy the Macchi M.33 has always had a place in the history of air racing – despite rather than because of its lack of success. And of course it was the inspiration for Porco Rosso's aircraft in the Japanese movie of the same name.

I confess I have a couple of serious problems with SBS kits. The first is that I am addicted and they don't help by finding new and interesting subjects and ways to improve their products that are invariably the equal or better than the best kits from any manufacturer... so I just *have* to buy them. The second is that I am running out of superlatives to describe their products. It can be taken as read that their M.33 is well up to their usual exemplary standard...and then some! So I will confine this review to just the new and exceptional aspects of this, their latest but two, releases.



The basics of the main kit are simple enough: 33 resin bits (32 mid-grey, 1 clear), 19 on a PE fret and 4 cast in brass (for the engine struts) and lastly a tiny printed acetate sheet for the instruments and an equally tiny mask for the windscreen. Decals for three airframes (one test and two as raced). The accessory sets add 6 mid-grey resin parts for the beaching gear and 16 in stainless steel PE for the rigging. The evidence for SBS's clever thinking, attention to detail and customer care notably includes:

- Lots of spares. There is one extra of each of the prop blades, radiator halves and rudder pedals and an extra wire for each of the seven different lengths of the rigging wires. Drilling locations for the rigging are indicated with tiny divots. Suitably drilled all the rigging is, for once, an easy task.
- The ribbing on the fabric surfaces is so well executed and subtle that any attempt at refinement would be fraught with the danger of damaging them. So SBS have made the trailing edges so fine that they do not need any work at all. Indeed, the last couple of millimetres of the trailing edges are so fine that the resin becomes translucent.
- The fuselage/hull is in one piece forming a tub that is closed by the wing/centre section. The fit is near perfect, the join lines are hidden and easy to clean up, needing just a light sand and no filler.

- There are positive recesses and tabs for all the major assemblies. This also applies to the brass engine and float struts and you would have to work very hard to get anything to miss-align.
- Decals for the red/white/green striping on the empennage are printed both with and without the Fascist shields but also with separate shields if you choose to paint rather than decal the stripes.
- Incredible detail can be found everywhere: a good example is that all of the 24 perfectly spaced exhaust pipes are drilled out; each is less than 0.7mm in outside diameter.
- The beaching trolley is a gem and solves the display problem common to most flying boats.

The only gripes are with the instructions and thankfully they are all minor and/or easily addressed. SBS have an aversion to supplying finish or colour details for the interiors of their kits. It must be said in their defence that many of their subjects are relatively obscure and thus information is scarce. And many, like this one, have little that can be seen once they are assembled.

Slightly more irritating is the occasional vagueness in the assembly notes. One example: a keel extension (part 23) is provided to go on the hull under the rudder post but does not appear on the coloured profiles or the box art. Similarly SBS note that the louvres on the tip of the engine pod are not on all aircraft – but does not say which ones have them. A check of my limited references suggests that the louvres and keel were not on the prototype when first tested and were added following the test with MM49 at Lake Varese, presumably at the same time that the counter balanced rudder was fitted. The keel extension, louvres and revised rudder were certainly on MM48 and MM49 by the time they arrived in Baltimore for the 1925 Trophy races.

Which brings us to one conversion possibility. In its very earliest form when first flown and photographed MM49 lacked the keel extension and had a different fin with a more elegant unbalanced rudder. Modifying and reshaping the rudder is easy, a replacement fin will need some careful scraping and sanding to replicate the subtlety of SBS's fabric effect. It was devoid of markings and apparently unpainted so finishing should be simple.

Thanks to its limited participation in the Schneider races and its lack of success (coming only third in the 1925 series) references for the M.33 are fairly scarce and most are illustrated with the same half dozen or so photographs. Ralf Pegram's excellent "Schneider Trophy Seaplanes and Flying Boats" has a nice 3 view but the best reference by far is Giorgio Apostolo and Gianni Cattaneo's "Idrocorsa Macchi" which has an excellent set of drawings and is an essential source in both Italian and English for any of the M.33, M.39, M.52, M.67 or M.72 Macchi thoroughbreds.

This kit sets new standards with its engineering and fit and it is obviously **VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**. We can only hope that they continue to release many more of the Schneider racers.

STAR WARS RAZOR CREST

Revell kit 06781 in 1/72 scale

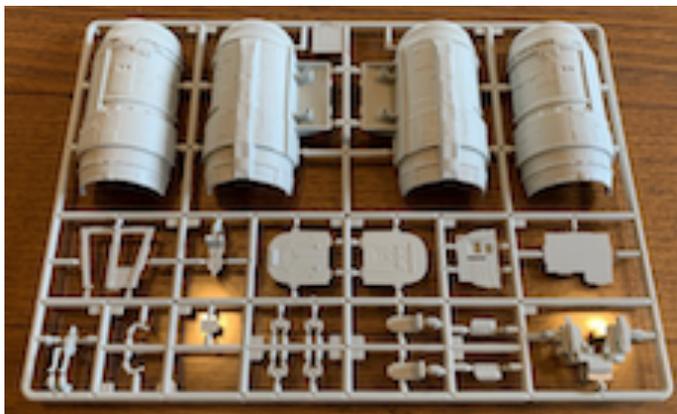
Reviewed by Lindsay Charman



BACKGROUND

This model represents a new generation of Revell-Germany's Star Wars kit design. It's to 1:72 scale, so it immediately fits in with the other 'serious' SW kit manufacturers ranges (eg FineMolds and Bandai) and it is of a ship from a multi-part Disney TV series that has had a big impact among younger SW fans. The prototype is actually one of the main "characters" so this is a fine subject for Revell-Germany to offer. At the time this review was written, the kit has been available in the USA (and online) for 10 months or so but it had not arrived in Sydney shops until relatively recently.

The back-story (if you have not watched the TV series) is that 'The Mandalorian' (who is named Din Djarin and is a bounty hunter by profession) obtained the Razor Crest as his personal transport. It was originally built as an ST-70 class Razor Crest M-111, and was sometimes known in some references as an ST-70 assault ship. In the tradition of great sci-fi TV shows, throughout the two TV series the vessel has all sorts of terrible damage, bad landings, attacks from friend and foe alike, and some rough treatment from at least one monstrous creature – but it is always able to be repaired and in one notable case, very temporarily patched up.



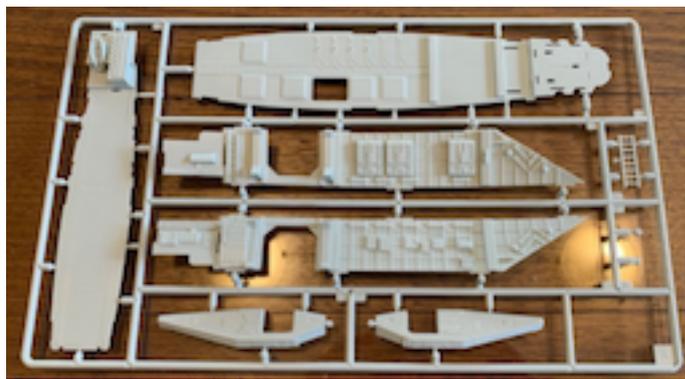
Sadly it meets an untimely end towards the close of Series 2, though Din Djarin lives on and soon he acquires an extremely hotted-up N-1 Naboo Starfighter (which I think deserves a kit of its own, as it looks great, but I am not going to chop around a perfectly good 1:72 FineMolds kit of the N-1), but that's another story.

The surface detailing is very commendable and it also has a fairly high level of interior detail as well. It's fairly big and chunky too, so it looks good next to 'biggish' SW kits like the Republic Gunship, the Tydirium Shuttle and even the Millennium Falcon. The model seems to have been made to complement the popular series by reflecting detail and features of the TV show Razor Crest, which viewing fans grow to appreciate as the two series show rolled along.

PACKAGING

The Revell-Germany box is big, and it is also fairly flimsy. This is not a worry if you buy and build quickly (perhaps immediately?) but I am a bit of a collector, often hauling my old kits down for the occasional look through before packing them up and storing them again, eventually getting around to starting them. Consequently, Revell's boxes don't usually last the distance in my storage so I am not greatly impressed with this box either. The box at least really needs to be big though – this not a kit where the sprues can bounce around a box four times the necessary size!

The Razor Crest was is similar in concept and size to the earlier SW Republic Gunship, but for a 1:72 aircraft modeller it looks to me like a cross between the Caribou, A-10, CH-53, MV-22 Osprey, C-119 and C-123, with a large loadmaster's domain aft of the raised flight deck, with an opening/closing aft ramp and side ramps (port and starboard) and lots of boxes, ladders hoses and other detailed bits inside the somewhat capacious fuselage cargo bay.



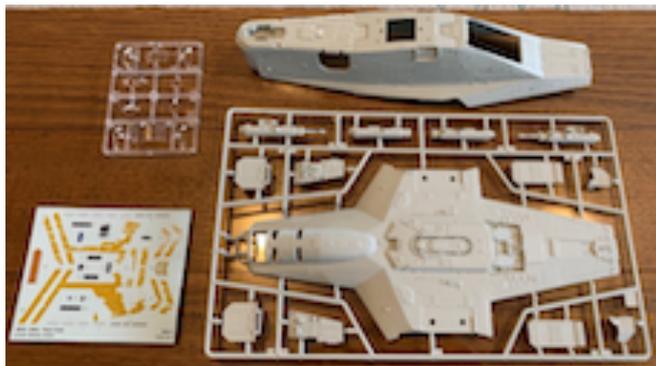
The flight deck is reasonably well glazed, and there are three doors to load stuff inside. It is powered by two huge jet like engines of some description, mounted on stub wings high above the fuselage, and reminiscent of a pair of massive 1:72 RR Trents. How they would operate in space, I have no idea. It is also armed with two big laser cannons up front that can swivel up and down and it also carries some other sneaky weapon systems hidden away in its structure. The heavy-duty pad type tricycle undercarriage is very much like the Millennium Falcon's.

PARTS

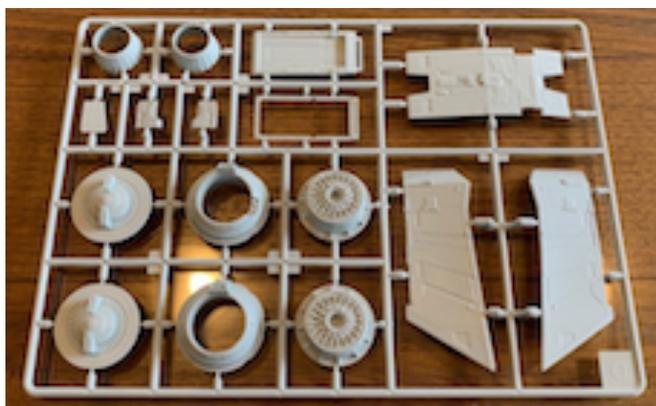
There are six sprues with a quite impressive quantity of parts – rather more than previous similarly scaled Revell Germany kits (see samples of the sprues in the photos).

This is a real kit that you assemble with glue, sand down and paint, unlike the earlier Revell-Germany snap together, pre-painted 'kits'. The two fuselage halves are not attached to the sprues and sit wedged in the box until it is opened, with the rest of the parts nicely bagged in plastic. There is a large colourful instruction booklet and

a nice looking decal sheet, with pre-weathered markings. The yellow colour of the main markings exactly matches the Pantone hue specified for the series!



The transparencies are made up of a series of smaller parts. These parts look a little complex to me, but hopefully with a bit of careful consideration and planning, they will go together to get an accurate representation of the Mandalorian's flight deck area. Once you look at the fuselage halves, large fuselage/stub-wing upper piece and the engines and dry-run them together, you can begin to see that this thing has a lot of styrene, as much plastic as one of the old 1/72 scale Airfix B-29 kit.



ACCURACY & DETAIL

Well it sure looks like the part to me with the contours captured nicely and the undercarriage looks like the original. There are even some relatively subtle asymmetric peculiarities visible in the TV series that Revell has captured quite faithfully, which is a nice indication of good research.

There is a lot of detail all over the surface of the TV show Razor Crest, with lots of panels, patching, ribs, intakes and lots of other orifices. The kit captures this quite well, both inside and out. The detail is perhaps not as crisp as that found on Bandai kits to 1:72 however, as it is slightly "softer" looking. This, in my opinion, does not detract once the model is assembled, and with a coat of paint and a little weathering, it looks great.

The small figure of Din Djarin is recognizably dressed like a Mandalorian, though again the detail is a little soft – Bandai execute most of their figures rather better in my opinion. However, well painted and seated in the seat of the flight deck, it will look the part.

SUMMING UP

The kit is a big model, and it is quite well detailed. It isn't cheap in Australia (so far) but it's well researched and it look very impressive when assembled and painted. I

think it will look great next to the rest of any 1:72 scale collection of Star Wars machines. RECOMMENDED.

FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The final APMA meeting of the year was on the 10th December 2023 and it saw a brand new committee elected, with the results already detailed on page 1 of this edition of the newsletter, as well as in the President's recent email. The AGM meeting also provided the opportunity for a very impressive number of entries (or display models) on the tables, with 30 or so individual models.

The results of the two competitions were as follows:

People's Choice: Jeremy Greenwood for his 1/72 Airfix Bristol Beaufort

Modeller's Choice: Ian Wrenford for his 1/48 Fairey Gannet

All models were to a very impressive standard, and were a joy to see. It had been hoped to include a small selection photos in this issue but file-size requirements precluded this. Check out the APMA website for similar photos.

THANKS EXTENDED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ASSOCIATION

Finally, thanks were (and are) also extended to the editors of the newsletter David Muir and Bill Renfrew, to the editors of the magazine, Andrew Moores and Jire Kure, to the Webmaster Andrew Jones, to Ian Wrenford for much technical and practical guidance throughout the past few years, to Marshall Ahern for stepping in as the Returning Officer for the election process, and to Ley Reynolds of Platypus Publications for the donation of prizes in this (and past) years.

Thanks were also made to the outgoing committee.

REQUEST FOR REVIEWS

As there was a little space on the last page here, this gives us the chance to include a reminder and a request for member contributions.

If you have a new kit or book, or have perhaps obtained a copy of a long out-of-production kit or book, please send us your thoughts on them.

If an event is coming up soon that might be of interest to modellers, why not try letting others know via the newsletter?