

Tactical Notes

January 2014

Eastern Bloc Edition!



Sopwith Pup



Next meeting: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 7 p.m.
2012 and 2013 Region 4 Newsletter of the Year!

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"Tactical Notes" is the Newsletter of the Military Modelers Club of Louisville, Inc. We appreciate your taking the time to read this little newsletter. We'd appreciate it even more if you would write something. **Yes, I am talking to you!**

Cover Photos:

Editor's Note

Please pardon me while I get serious for this month's Editor's Note. I promise the usual lack of seriousness will return next month.

It has been my distinct pleasure to be a member of MMCL since sometime in 1982, or maybe even late 1981. MMCL has meant a lot to me in all those years. All of my very best friends have been made thru this club. Some of the best times in my life have been spent in the company of club members. The club meetings, the all-nighters, the road trips, the contests. These are the memories that never fail to bring a smile to my face. My friends in the club have gotten me thru good times and bad, never once letting me take anything seriously. I needed that.

Therefore, it was most gratifying to me to have the club make me a life member at the December meeting. I cannot begin to tell you what this means to me. MMCL has been thru some ups and downs over the years, but I can honestly say that the club is as strong as it has ever been with some masterful building going on. I hope that 2014 continues this trend and that we have a growing membership, a great contest and much modeling fellowship. See you all in 2014. And write something for the newsletter, damn it!

Announcement: Unit Reunion

The 69th "Howling Bedpan Commandos"
45th Anniversary of "The Battle of Dayton"
Reunion

Place: Hong's Chinese Restaurant

When: February 29th, 2014 11 P.M.

For more info, Contact Gen. Dissary (Ret.)

Unidot Suite 69, Our Lady of Peace,
Louisville, KY

Modeling the Sopwith Pup

**By Dennis Sparks, MMCL East Bloc
Propaganda Minister**

First flown in February 1916, the Scout was the Sopwith Aviation Company's first single seat fighter plane. Despite its official designation, the aircraft was immediately nicknamed the "Pup" owing both to its diminutive size and its family resemblance to its older sibling, the two-seat Sopwith 1½ Strutter. As Sopwith was still heavily engaged with construction of the 1½ Strutter, most of the 1770 Pups that were built were constructed under license by either the Standard Motor Company or Whitehead Aircraft. Most were fitted with an 80 hp. Clerget rotary engine, while some of the later production examples had the 100 hp. Gnome Monosoupape.



Introduced in combat by October 1916, it was able to best the German Albatros D.IIs that were then in service. But with the advent of more advanced types, the Pup was largely withdrawn from combat by the autumn of 1917. At its peak, the Pup had equipped three Royal Flying Corps squadrons and four land-based Royal Naval Air Service squadrons.

The Pup's large wing area and light weight of only 787 lbs. made it remarkably maneuverable, and its relatively vice less flying characteristics led to the aircraft continuing to see service in both the Home Defense squadrons and as an advanced trainer after being removed from the front lines. It was also used for some of the Royal Navy's experiments aboard what was to become Britain's first true aircraft carrier, HMS Furious.

When construction began in 1915, Furious had been designed for the single purpose of shore bombardment along Germany's Baltic coast in support of an amphibious landing. As such, it was to have only a single large turret fore and aft, each equipped with a single 18 inch gun. The ship was intended to be both large and fast, but was given only very light armor to allow a relatively shallow draft (or being British, "draught") so that it could operate closer to shore. But when this sort of mission was later viewed as being unlikely to succeed, the decision was made to convert the ship for use as an aircraft carrier.

When commissioned in June 1917, the incomplete forward turret had been

replaced by a small hangar deck under a downward sloping 160 foot long “flying off” deck. This length was considered adequate for the Pup, as it was reported to be able to take off in as little as 20 feet when aided by a 20 knot headwind. The original concept was that the aircraft would later land ashore, but some consideration was given to shipboard landings as well. Again the Pup seemed up to this task, as it was thought to be able to alight within the length of tennis court with this same 20 knot headwind. The major obstacle was of course the ship’s large superstructure and funnel, and so it was envisioned that the aircraft would fly alongside the ship until past this obstruction, and then side slip and land on the deck.

RNAS squadron leader E.H. Dunning successfully accomplished this later task twice on 02 August 1917, becoming the first pilot to land aboard a ship that was underway. Attempting to repeat this feat five days later, he crashed into the sea off the starboard bow and drowned.

Because of this, a few months later the aft turret was also removed and replaced with a 300 foot long “landing on” deck and

a second hangar deck and elevator, with Furious returning to service in March 1918. This aft deck however proved to be not very useful due to the turbulence created by the funnel.

On 15 April 1918, Captain A.N. Gallehawk successfully landed on the forward flight deck in Sopwith Pup N6438, which carried the nickname “Excuse Me”, which is the subject of this model. At that time, the aircraft was equipped with experimental wooden skids, presumably to shorten the landing run. Several other similar skid arrangements were tested on other Pups before the concept was abandoned in favor of continuing to use the normal landing gear.

On 19 July 1918, Furious launched eight Sopwith Camels, each carrying two 50 lb. bombs to attack the Zeppelin sheds at Tondern, Denmark. One was forced to abort with engine problems, but the other seven destroyed the hydrogen-filled Zeppelins L54 and L60 as well as a captive balloon. This is regarded as the first carrier-based air strike in

history. After the war, Furious was rebuilt with a full flight deck and an offset island. She later served in WWII, remaining in service until being placed in reserve in September 1944 before being scrapped in 1948.



And now, the Model...

This 1/48th scale kit was originally issued by Eduard in 1995, and I believe that it was among the last of the ones that were produced with the lower pressure copper molds before Eduard began using more durable steel molds. As such, the kit's parts are somewhat "flashy", with rather thick attach points. The kit was re-released c.1999 as part of their Flashback series, with added resin parts and different decals. The two markings options were for Dunning's aircraft, which was equipped with wheels, and the skid-equipped Pup as flown by Gallehawk.

I opted to build Gallehawk's aircraft as it was the more unusual of the two, but the skids provided in the kit were resin castings and were distinctly pretzel-shaped. I tried to straighten them with hot water, but eventually used them only as patterns to make copies with Evergreen plastic strips. I had started construction on the kit around 2006 or 2007, before giving it an extended rest until returning to it and finishing in 2011, so some (most!) of the details of the problems I may have encountered are more than a bit hazy. I'm pretty sure I gave up on at least some of the wing struts and replaced them with Evergreen as well. The kit's engine was a soft metal casting of a relatively featureless nine-cylinder engine, and the photoetch fret contained an intake manifold as seen on the Clergets. But as I'm hopelessly inept with PE, most of the fret went unused. I probably shoulda'/coulda' at least added some

scratch-built pushrods that were present on both the Clerget and the Gnome, but I had already expended more effort than I wanted to on other parts of the model and so didn't.

The entire model was brush-painted with Humbrol enamels, followed by a brushed-on coat of Future, kit decals, then a final brushed on coat of Model Master Acryl (a mixture of Flat and Semi-Flat). It's rigged with 0.006 inch "ceramic wire" that I had bought from Precision Enterprises years ago. The skids, struts and prop were all painted with a dark brown, streaked with a lighter brown for an authentic(!) wood grain effect, then coated with Tamiya's Clear Orange acrylic to replicate varnish.

I had also begun building one of the Roden 1/48th scale Sopwith 1½ Strutters at about the same time as an accompanying piece but I'm still working up the nerve to get restarted on it. With the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War coming up in 2014, I'm thinking about concentrating for a while on models with (mostly) two wings and (mostly) lots of rigging.





Building the DML Pz. IV, Ausf. J.

By Randy Fuller
MMCL/Eastern Bloc
Member-at-Large

Sometimes we let modern technology spoil us. Not just our flat screen TVs, GPS, SmartPhones, and microwave ovens, but the technology that goes into model kits. We often overlook the fact that advances in mold making have led to some truly dramatic kits recently: super thin molded pieces with fine detail on both sides of the mold, nearly non-existent pin marks, and a fit to make you swoon. But when you look back at kits 10, 20 or 30 years old, we often scoff at the simplicity and poor design. Still, there were cutting edge kits coming out of Japan and China, and this DML Panzer IV is no exception.

The date on my box was 1994, so nearly 20 years after it was produced; it found the light of day on my bench. (Thanks to Koko for the inspiration with his recent smackdown). Overall the fit was workable, only needing a little putty here and there. One of the first kits on the market to have individual link tracks, too, while not to the standard of Fruilmodel or Modelkasten tracks, still decent nonetheless. Metal etched parts were included for the grenade screen mounts and additional armor plates, but no turned metal barrel or fine screens. Since I was restricted to building right from the box, I would need some skill to complete a decent tank.

I like to build sub-assemblies, paint, and then put together. Step one was assembling the lower hull -- pretty straightforward and no real issues. Next I go for the road wheels -- and this kit had plenty! I glued up the pairs, primed with Vallejo Red-Brown, painted Vallejo Old Rubber for the rubber sections, then using a circle template, I sprayed the camo colors on the hubs. After basecoating the lower hull and adding some dirt and grime from AK Interactive, I attached the road wheels, idlers and sprockets.

Next I moved onto the tracks. I don't assemble then paint -- I paint then assemble. I paint each sprue of links a slightly different shade of red-brown, then cut them off the sprues and weather with rust and dirt pigments. I toss a bunch of links in a plastic cup, add the pigments, spray some fixer and toss. This gives each link an individual characteristic. Once done, I begin to glue them together using a straightedge to keep them aligned. After a several minutes and the glue has begun to set, I add top and bottom runs to the model to get the correct drape and curves to the tracks. I tape them in place until set. When fully cured, I will show wear with a dry brushing of Humbrol Polished Metal.

The turret is simple enough, and posed no fit problems. I glued up the

main gun barrel, put it on my mini-lathe and sanded it smooth. A couple of coats of Mr. Surfacer between sandings made sure it was round. The instructions show the gun mount in reverse, so I had to backtrack after I installed the inner and outer pieces since the gun wouldn't fit! I kept all the hatches closed as there are no internal details. So far, so good.



However, adding the PE metal brackets for the turret and hull armor & screens was a bear. The metal is really thick and strong. Even annealing did not soften it up to make bending it easy. It was a bit of a chore and compared to aftermarket PE today, this stuff was like working with pig iron. Still I “persuaded” it to fit and moved on. Once the brackets were attached, I began painting. When the colors were done and I wasn't spraying any more, I attached the tracks. I built and painted/weathered the exhausts separately as well, then attached once the main painting was complete. The turret was also added to the lower hull so everything would look blended.

I painted the kit with Vallejo German colors for the camo, and weathered with AK Interactive and Mig Productions products. Before I began weathering, I added the decals. I glossed over the areas that had markings (only the turret armor plates) with Future acrylic floor finish, cut the decals out and applied. My decals were yellowed pretty badly, but since this was going to get dirty, I didn't mind. While thick, they settled down with a drenching of SolvaSet. I added paint chips along the edges with Humbrol polished metal and using a fine detail brush I went back over the chips to add some rust. The grenade screen was painted using an airbrush and then using a small brush added wear and rust before attaching to the tank itself. Various streaking grime, fuel and oil stains, dirt, dust, rust, and mud were added. I really just wanted to experiment with dirtying up this tank.

The finishing details – pioneer tools, machine gun barrels, and grenade screens were the final pieces to add. I like the look of the screen, because it was actual screen, like from a window. A little tough to cut, but seems appropriate for the scale. The sheet DML provided was more than enough for

the project.

I took Mig Pigments Fresh Mud, and piled it up on the fenders, wheels, and lower hull, then added pigment fixer to the piles. Once it had dried, I took a toothbrush to remove the excess. This gave me a nice mud buildup on the surfaces. I dusted a little Mig Light Mud on top to tone it down. A final light airbrush pass with a very thin Tamiya Desert Yellow added the right amount of dust to the project.

Overall, it was nice kit to build. Fit was good and the details molded into the surface and tracks were outstanding. While these individual links were a bit fussy at times, I am pleased with the results, and probably would not use a replacement anyway. Compared to some of today's armor kits, this little panzer kit can hold its own.



In Memorium

John C. McIntire

The club has just learned of the passing of long-time club member, John C. McIntire. Mac, as he was affectionately known was a fixture in MMCL for quite a number of years, though recent health problems limited his participation in the past few years.

John was an eclectic modeler, who would build armor one minute and paint figures and busts the next. John was instrumental in the early set up of the first MMCL workshop in the basement of Dr. Hill's office. Mac also began the aluminum recycling project that continues to this day. He was always willing to help out at the club's early contests.

MMCL will greatly miss John. Our prayers are with his family.



The Cranky Canuck

By Jim Bates

Lost Black Sheep: The Search for WWII Ace Chris Magee

When most people think about VMF-214, aka “The Black Sheep,” they remember either Pappy Boyington or the fictional characters from the 1970s TV show. Few know that a member of VMF-214 was not only an ace, but his life was probably more interesting than the fiction they remember with nostalgia. His name was Chris Magee.

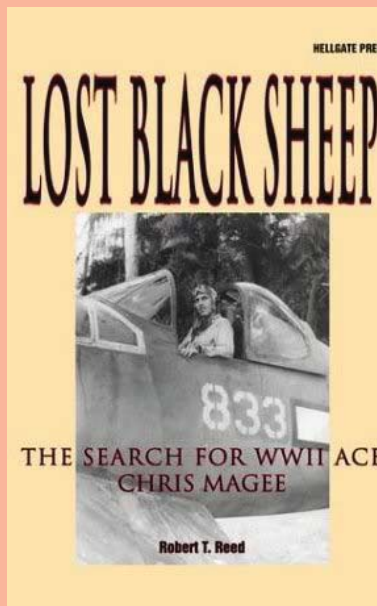
Robert T. Reed’s book, *Lost Black Sheep: The Search of WWII Ace Chris Magee*, is written in two parts; the first, a biography of Mr. Magee, the second, a search for Mr. Reed’s roots, and the two turn out to have significant crossover. Chris Magee grew up in Chicago and, as a young man, tried to get to Europe to become a fighter pilot in World War II. He failed at first, but did end up training in Canada with the RCAF. After graduating with his wings from the RCAF he joined the United States Marine Corps and became the second highest scoring ace with the Black Sheep. Mr. Magee was not the typical fighter pilot as portrayed on screen. He was a deeply intellectual man, who was a voracious reader and a great writer. Several of his letters are included in the book and they are well written, observant, and quite amusing

at times. Post-war, Mr. Magee continued flying as a mercenary with Israel, later became a bank robber and then spent some time as a guest of the Federal Government. After paying his debt to society, he dropped off the face of the earth.

The second section of the book is more personal for Mr. Reed. He discovered that the man he grew up calling «Dad» was not his biological father; it was actually Mr. Magee. Robert tracked down Mr. Magee and set out to establish a relationship. What does an ace, robber, and mercenary do in old age? Apparently, settle down to a life in a small apartment outside of Chicago to continue his intellectual quests, spending most of his time with his nose in a book.

The story continues as Mr. Reed becomes acquainted with his father and reintroduces Chris to both his fellow Black Sheep and Mr. Magee’s remaining estranged family members.

Lost Black Sheep is quite interesting and enjoyable. After finishing it, I longed for more insight into what made Mr. Magee tick. Clearly he was far from the stereotypical fighter pilot and certainly no two dimensional underscripted TV character.



Book review: The German Invasion of Norway, April 1940

By Geirr H. Haarr

ISBN 978 1 59114 323 9

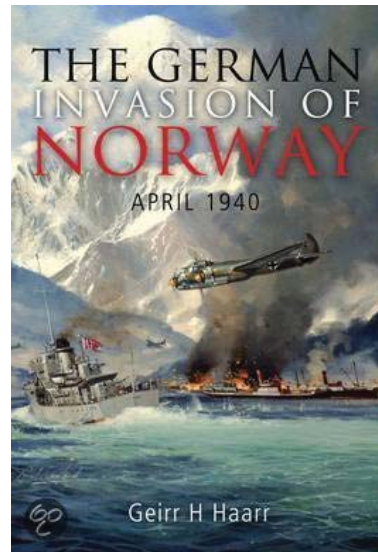
466 pgs

2nd Edition published by Naval Institute Press

Review by D.M. Knights IPMS/USA 17656, IPMS/Canada C6091

This is the first volume in a two-volume set on the invasion and conquest of Norway by the Germans in April thru June of 1940. The author is a Norwegian historian and his special attachment to the subject is obvious from the detail in the book. This first volume covers the lead up to the invasion of Norway by the Germans on April 9th, 1940 and the few days thereafter. It concentrates on mainly naval actions of the German, British and Norwegian navies, though some of the initial German paratroop actions as well as British and German aircraft combats are covered as well.

At the outbreak of WWII, Norway found itself in a most precarious position. The country had miniscule Army, Navy and Air forces. Its government leaned toward the allies, but it maintained a scrupulous neutrality in order to avoid giving the Germans a pretext for invading Norway. Additionally, the Allied war strategy in 1939-1940 was to repeat their strategy of World War I and strangle the German economy and war machine. While Norway itself provided very little in trade to



Germany, its northern port, Narvik, was the terminus of a railway line bringing Swedish iron ore to the port for shipment to Germany. These iron ore shipments provided Germany with

20% to 30% of her raw iron ore supply.

The first 1/3rd of the book lays these details out, and the Norwegian efforts to walk the fine line of neutrality. They were unsuccessful. Both the allies and the axis had plans for Norway. Great Britain wished to seize Narvik (and the Swedish ore mines) and was looking for a pretext to do so. The Russian war with Finland provided an excuse (Russia was Germany's ally at the time and the path to ship weapons to the Finns lay thru Narvik and northern Sweden.) That conflict ended only a week or two before Britain could put her plan into action. France knew that the next blow in the war would fall on its country and was looking to start a battle front anywhere that might distract the Germans from opening an offensive in the west. The Germans weren't really interested in an invasion of Norway and Denmark, but made contingency plans in case the British tried to seize or cut off their iron ore supply route. (Which, ironically is exactly what the British were planning.)

President's Page

By Stu Cox

MMCL Members,

Join us this week for our January 2014 MMCL Meeting at the Kyana facility. We have a great meeting planned with jam packed Military Modeling subject matter!

We will kick off our meeting with a brief planning discussion regarding our upcoming MMCL Invitational Show on May 17. Please also bring some of your models that are in process (not necessarily finished) for "in progress show and tell". We will have the first Smackdown contest of 2014, the "**Show me your Shoki! Ki-44 1:72 Smackdown**". Rules of engagement are: Any markings, 1:72 scale only. Any kit. Aftermarket allowed. (**Ed. Note. This smackdown has been postponed until June.**)

We will have a featured guest speaker at our meeting, **retired Navy Captain, Norman Raderer**. Norm served with the 1st Marines near Da Nang during the Vietnam war. He has some very interesting slides to share and discuss in support of a number of scale modeling subjects and scenarios! I think you'll find that his presentation has some interesting inspirational material for Vietnam themed figures, aircraft, ships, artillery and dio's! You won't want to miss this presentation!

Our Saturday Workshop attendance has been very high and continues to grow. Thanks to all of you who made a point to come out to Workshop sessions over the holidays.

More to come on our plans for 2014! We look forward to another great year of scale modeling and fellowship!



Quiz question: Who is this actress? Bonus question: What type of aircraft is she sitting on?

2014
IPMS/Louisville
Invitational
Contest

D-Day
The Invasion of
Normandy

70th Anniversary

May 17, 2014
9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

3821 Hunsinger Ln,
Louisville, KY
40220



Show Contact information:

Dr. Terry Hill

thill35434@aol.com

Vendor Contact

Dave Crouch

dcrou@bellsouth.net

Entry fee: \$10(\$8 for IPMS/USA members with card) which includes the first two models, \$1 per model after the second.

Juniors: (under 18) Flat \$5. General admission: \$2

www.MMCL.org



Please Join us on

Military Modelers of Louisville Membership Form 2014

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Birth Date: _____ Year Joined Club: _____

Would you like to receive your newsletter by e-mail? The e-mail version of Tactical Notes is in full color and is sent using the PDF format: Yes _____ No _____

Do you give MMCL permission to place your contact information on the club website: Yes _____ No _____

What are the advantages of membership to the Military Modelers Club of Louisville?

- Monthly meetings held on the third Thursday of the month at the club workshop located at 3821 Hunsinger Lane in Louisville KY.
- A monthly subscription to the official newsletter of the Military Modelers Club of Louisville, Tactical Notes. Tactical Notes contains kit reviews, editorials and modeling techniques.
- The Club Workshop. MMCL has its own club workshop. This is a great place for modelers to build kits and have a good time. The club provides tables, work lights and various tools. We also have quarterly all night model building sessions at this location.
- Quarterly in house model contests with prizes.
- Monthly model kit raffle.
- Annual club cookout.

All of this and more is included in your yearly \$10.00 membership (junior \$5.00) dues.

Please complete all information above and forward your check made out to MMCL for \$10.00 to:

Stu Cox, President
4100 WIMPOLE ROAD
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Please visit us on the web at WWW.MMCL.ORG

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