

## Turning a 1:72 Tracker into a firebomber

By Ken Miller

The California Department of Forestry (CDF) uses a fleet of converted Grumman S-2 *Trackers* to fight wildfires in California. I just completed a 1:72 conversion of a fire-fighting *Tracker* and it turned out rather well. The conversion wasn't that complicated and it built up into a unique model.

Getting photos of the real thing was the first step. Hollister Air Attack Base is the closest base to the South Bay, and they have two S-2s and an O-2 forward air controller plane. Santa Rosa has a C-130, an S-2 and an O-2, and Atascadero has an S-2, a P-2 *Neptune* and an OV-10 *Bronco* forward air control plane. We called in advance and Hollister was very cordial in letting us on to the tarmac and into the cockpit for lots of pictures. The first time we went down, however, the planes were fighting a fire, so a little patience was required to get the shots!

I started with the Hasegawa 1:72 S-2 kit. All of the sub-chaser items were removed. The upper and lower radome slots were filled with sheet styrene and putty. The tailhook, MAD boom, side air scoops, depth charge racks and searchlight were all removed and smoothed over with putty. The tail was also trimmed and filled with putty.

I made the retardant bay with two strips of quarter-inch styrene stock and faired it with putty. Lots of lead solder was added to the nose and in the engines nacelles to keep the tail

off the ground.

The rear of the S-2's engines come in three varieties—completely faired, half faired or not faired at all, depending on

when the plane was manufactured. One of the Hollister S-2s has an unfaired nacelle, while the other was fully faired. Naturally, the kit comes half faired, so I cut the fairings off and built the unfaired-nacelle S-2. I filled in the sonobuoy tubes at the ends of the nacelles with super glue.

To give more life to the model, I drilled a hole in the nose for an additional landing light. Stretched sprue attached with super glue made cool antennae on the wing and fuselage.

The plane is overall white with red used for the wingtips, tail and the two stripes around the fuselage just forward of the tail. The nacelles have red and black striping. The decals were an assortment of *Woodland*

*Scenics* dry transfer numbers and letters applied on *ATP* decal film and *SuperScale* number and letter decals. The white tail pinstripes and the separating line for the two fuselage bands are *Woodland Scenics* dry transfer white stripes applied over *ATP* decal film. The CDF shields were the tough part. I faked them with red, yellow and green decal trim film cut to size with a razor blade. I guess I could have paid someone to make

Continued on page 10



A California Department of Forestry S-2 pulls up after releasing 400 gallons of fire retardant on a brush fire. This Stoof has the fully-faired engine nacelles.

The *Styrene Sheet* is a monthly publication of the Silicon Valley Chapter of the International Plastic Model Society (IPMS). Articles and comments should be submitted to Chris Bucholtz, Editor, P.O. Box 361644, Milpitas, CA 95036, or by E-mail at 207-3426@mcimail.com. Excerpts may be published only with the written permission of the editor.

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# EDITOR'S BRIEF

Since our last newsletter, there have been four contests in our region—at HobbyTown USA's Milpitas and Fresno stores and IPMS events in Fresno and Monterey. That means that there's been plenty of opportunities to goof around and talk models—and maybe even win an award—outside of club meetings.

I'm proud to say that our chapter is the most travelin' bunch in Region IX. Kudos should go to the road warriors: Brad Chun, Rich Pedro, Jim Lewis, Mike Burton, Bill Ferrante, Frank Beltran, Dave Balderrama, Rick Yokogawa, Hubert Chan, Mark Hernandez, Larry Roberts, Rodney Williams and Milt Polous. The vast majority of these folks also brought home awards for their efforts, testifying to the skill present among our club members.

SVSM contributes mightily to the core of guys who make the rounds of the region (a core completed by delegations from Stockton, Fresno, Redding and Fremont). These are the people that make contests work. Not only do they bring a mob of entries, but they volunteer to judge. As a result, the partisanship that has been present in judging has been eliminated in many instances. The trend of first place going to the modeler from Bumpkinville at the Bumpkinville contest is waning, thanks to the help of this core of modelers.

That's because they know how to judge. They have experience. And they've probably all been burned at sometime or another by the hometown bias.

That said, it was a little distressing to see the meager turnout at the Fresno Scale Modelers' contests and the Monterey Bay chapter's contest. However, these clubs have had problems at their events in the recent past. I think it takes a minimum of two years to overcome a poor event, because the primary advertisement for a contest is word of mouth. Anyone on the fence about going to a contest will ask a friend who went to last year's event. If the response mentions a well-run event with good judging, a smooth registration process, a friendly attitude and a host of vendors, that fence-sitter's likely to go, and then the next year he'll join in singing its praises. But if he hears that the hometown boys took all the trophies, the three vendors all specialized in Lindberg science kits, it took two hours to register and the hosts didn't give a fig that he was even there to participate, Mr. fence-sitter's going to stay at home and do something more worthwhile, like shampooing the cat or washing and waxing his garbage cans.

Bad word of mouth lasts forever and takes a lot to overcome, and good word of mouth lasts only a year. So it's incumbent on anyone holding a contest—especially if they're inexperienced at it—to travel around and take notes. Some clubs do certain things well, while others fall into common traps. It's a wise man who learns from OTHER people's mistakes, and traveling around is the best way to avoid learning from first-hand experience.

That said, Monterey and Fresno had some problems, and I think the fact that their contests' organizers don't often travel to other contests is a contributing factor.

Fresno's problems were slight. The vendor turnout was very good, and the hosts had a fairly streamlined entry procedure. The room was also an improvement and helped with the overall attitude of the event. For all the categories

listed, the turnout was poor, and that's a shame. But the contest directors did some odd things with their splits. For instance, 1:72 aircraft, a segment that has become dangerously depleted lately, was boiled down into two categories, jets and props, with five or six entries per category. Meanwhile, 1:32 aircraft, with six entries, was split into two three-model divisions. Huh?

Monterey had more problems. Despite registrants having to fill out two forms, the organizers still couldn't match the winning models with any names at awards time. Turnout was sparse, to say the least. There were three vendors, and that includes the ubiquitous Richard Carlson and his SuperScale decals. Judging was done by the club, and resulted in some off-the-wall winners. Plus, a disagreement between two members had them scuttling about trying to one-up each other and ingratiate themselves to visitors. Weird.

Personally, the most telling incident involved the most basic rule of modeling etiquette: if you didn't build it, don't touch it. At the nationals, I wince at the idea of handling the models, and I don't think it's really necessary there, let alone at Monterey. When I put my models on the table (including the XF-85, which rests atop its dolly and isn't glued down), one of Monterey's folks came up and told me that should they need to move my models, they would ask me to do it. I said that I appreciated that, and we had a short discussion of how annoying it was to have people handle your models without your permission. When I came back from lunch, what did I see? The same guy I talked to earlier moving my model—which fell off its dolly and base. Needless to say, I wasn't happy about this. It's one thing to handle a model out of ignorance, like a six-year-old might. It's another thing to discuss it with a modeler and tell him one thing and then go and do something 180 degrees opposed to your original statement. Stuff like that leads to very little return business for a contest and a lasting reputation for its members.

Still, I'm looking forward to the Travis contest. That's a well-run event by people who know how it should be done. If you're on the fence, let me push you in the positive direction. Not only does the contest operate like it should, there's a great museum to spend time at.

A note: I won't be at the May meeting because of a family commitment, but I will be at Travis the next day. Angelo Deogracias will be the acting secretary, so anything you have for the newsletter can be given to him Friday or to me at Travis on Saturday.

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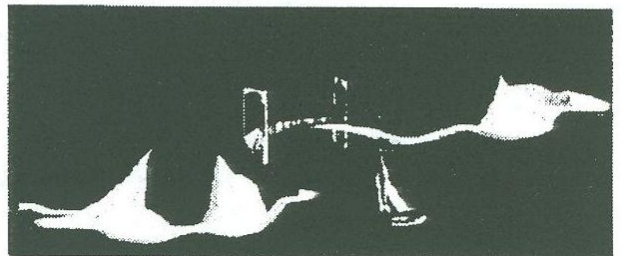
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*Best Automotive Finish*  
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*Best of Show (Junior)*



the Devil Mountain Boys.



IPMS Travis Scale Modelers

# Chrysler Turbine: a true jet-age dream car



A low-flying jet, the 1963 Chrysler Turbine. The treatment of the headlights was intended to suggest jet intakes.

**By Mike Burton**  
**•Part 4 in a series•**

The *piece de resistance* in classic dream car kitting, Chrysler's 1963 Turbine car was a damn good try at a real jet car for the consumer. A beautiful 4 seater, the 1963 Turbine was styled here in America by a then-recent expatriate from Ford who had done the 1961-63 Thunderbirds.

The turbine cars were built overseas by famous coachbuilder Ghia of Italy, because the 55-car order was deemed too large for Chrysler's styling prototype shop but not large enough to make mass production practical. Some sources say only 50 were built, but that's only the "production run." There were five prototypes which preceded the production 50.

All were employed in field tests throughout the contiguous 48 states from 1963 to 1966 by over 200 "average drivers" aged 21 to 70. Although only an average 30 percent of these drivers had major complaints (poor gas mileage or lag during acceleration) in the program's final report in 1967, Chrysler never divulged the mileage nor did it apparently recommend the concept's production.

A trade writer apparently managed some time in one during the tests, though Chrysler never put one out to the car magazines for evaluation. The same writer in a 1973 article reportedly recounted that the 4100 lb. car had a brisk (0-60 in 10-11 sec) acceleration but it only got 11.5 miles per gallon. He concurred with testers that the ride was smooth, but was disconcerting at first due to no engine braking!

The turbine engine would run on gasoline, kerosene, diesel or jet fuel, and Chrysler reported the maintenance compared to piston engines was nearly nil. The company even went on building more turbine prototypes into the late 1970s, with two generations of engines evolving.

We can only speculate why no production vehicles came

about. The 1963 model was closest we have come yet, but alas, the Federal guys made sure we didn't get them in the used car classifieds. Since the 55 were built overseas, they came in duty-free for the tests, but at the end Chrysler had to pay duties or ship them back to Italy. When the time came, the company paid up for 10 while U.S. Customs made sure those remaining 45 beauties were cut up by the torch as scrap...aaargh.

Well, at least we have our models...

**1963 Chrysler Turbine Car by JoHan, reissued, various years**

JoHan released an "exclusive Frame-Pak" model kit of the 1963 Turbine as part of its Gold Cup series, and it is often in production and available on the shelves of hobby shops. A collector in our club showed me an original, which at least explained the "Frame-Pak" parts layout. The original issue box is about two-thirds the size of the one used to pack current editions, and the JoHan designers cleverly arranged the parts on the trees so that, when stacked, all the parts on the trees interlock. The 118 pieces would then pack into the kit so perfectly that nary a piece would shake, rattle or roll, let alone crush, scratch or break, when the unopened box was handled.

The kit is extremely well-detailed, so you might think about the extra work it took to manage the packaging while still coming out with affordable steel molds. I don't know if other kits were done by JoHan in this fashion, but still, it's impressive.

A 15-piece turbine engine and transmission subassembly, with all the components clearly identified by name, start the assembly. Below the engine assembly step in the instructions, you get a fine short piece on how this specific engine works. The instruction sheet is a masterpiece of production technical illustration, rivaling some repair manuals for quality.

The kit turbine engine is comprised primarily of chromed parts. I first tried out the techniques of "bluing" on my kit. It seemed a chromed turbine engine was a good place to start to try duplicating the heat effect, as you might see on motorcycle exhaust manifold pipes. Applying graduated clear colors is easier on larger surfaces, and you can just leave the hood down if it looks real bad.

The real painting instructions are given for many of the parts, but I was experimenting. So unlike other "one off" car kits I reviewed, this one comes through on that point.

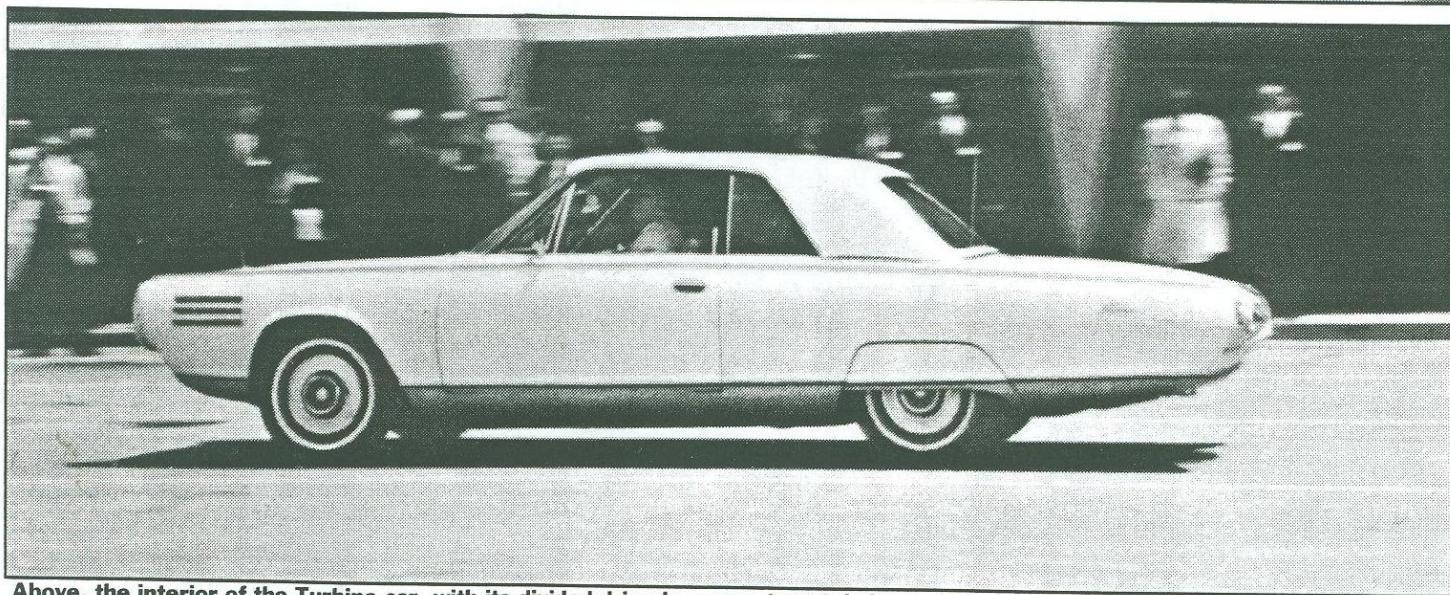
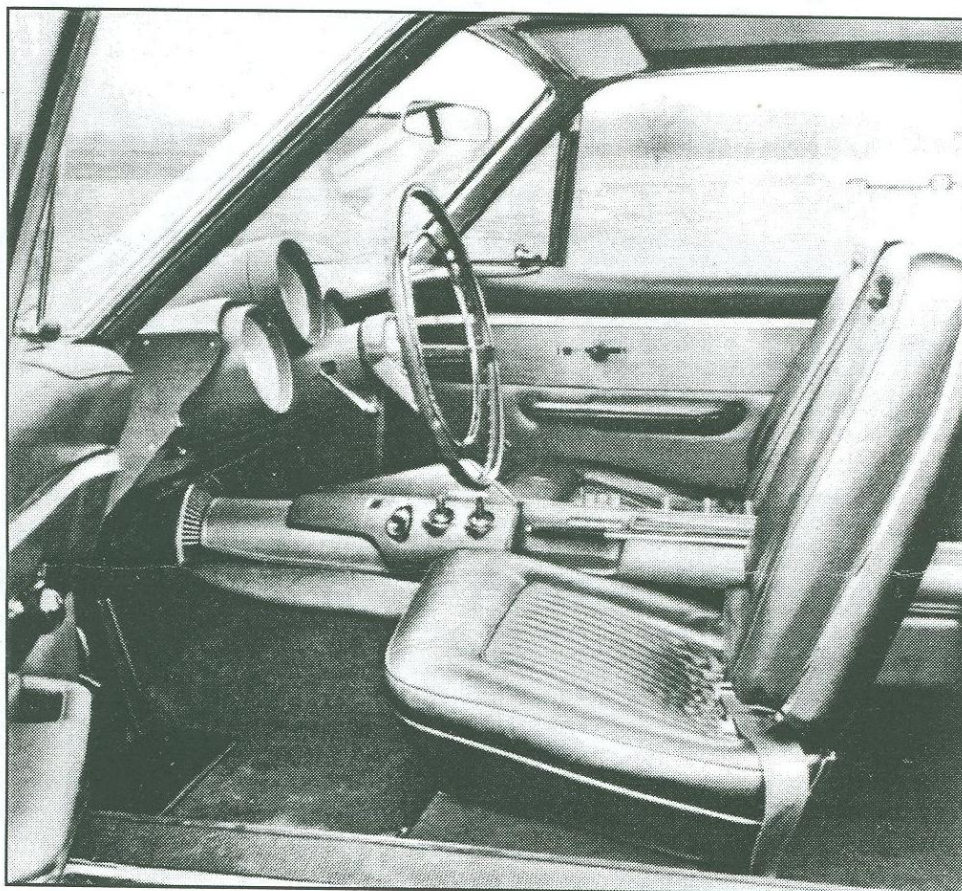
The next subassemblies are the front and rear suspensions, and the sheet cheerfully informs you that on the real car the front suspension is a new and unique design. Apparently it was made so the entire engine, tranny and suspension come off as a unit for servicing. This is about the only detail the kit doesn't duplicate. Control arms, spindles, brake drums, back plates, and "K" members are all individual parts. A set of scale-looking and working individual coil springs are injection-molded plastic items, and these wonderful details complete the chassis assembly.

They did stop short of providing loose bolts and nuts in scale to attach items as units, so you must glue the working assemblies onto the car. Again, all items are identified and you could teach basic car mechanics to anyone using this kit instead of a big greasy vehicle for your lab work.

The interior assembly is next. The shell has a textured surface to give a carpet effect, and this extends to trunk area which is also provided. Trunk detail includes the carpet-covered compartment where two 12-volt starter batteries and the solenoid are placed, covered by a

removable lid. The spare tire cover is also here, but amazingly no tire was provided. The passenger cabin includes working bucket seats, and the instruction sheet notes that leather trim was used inside and a bright anodized aluminum is the proper finish for console tube between the seats. This means some work on the kit's chromed part, which is a little too bright for reality. Loose parking brake and drive pedals also are provided.

For the body assembly, you get a separate instrument cluster and panel, horn ring and steering wheel. The front and rear glass is very thin with a scale appearance, and all of this fits into the one-piece body. The interior is completed when



**Above, the interior of the Turbine car, with its divided driver's compartment; below, a look at the Ghia-styled body of turbine number 1. This shot shows the physical evidence that Chrysler wanted to build a true production vehicle instead of a dream car.**

the separate rear wall with its two seat cushions is installed. The trunk lid is mounted with a separate stiffener frame, a nonstandard (but more realistic) car model kit method. When properly assembled, the trunk opens and closes with scale realism as far as the appearance at the joints and hinges.

The underbody step collects the front and rear suspensions with the engine onto the assembled body, and the detail parts are more abundant than in most car kits of this price, a nice bonus.

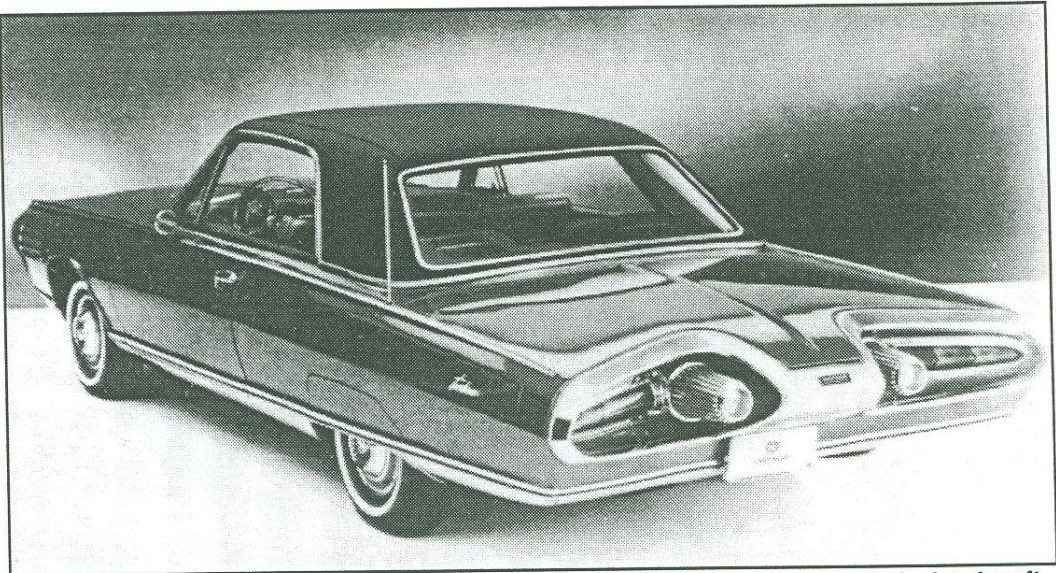
The final assembly is tricky, but the effort is worth it. The door parts are made to look scale, yet they open and close, and include vent window frames with thin glass. Headlight glass (not chrome dummies) and red taillight glass really bring to life the stylish front and rear chromed grills. Some care in gluing these lens parts is needed as fogging is a hazard. The front fenders are each separate of the body and their chrome trim inserts, and getting these matched and properly adhered is some fun. The operable hood includes a very small and easily broken off separate chromed ornament, and the door handles are also easy to lose as are those parking light lenses!

When painting the car exterior, you have some choices to make. The stock car had "leather" upholstered tops, and the kit has a mild textured effect here which can be painted black and made to look acceptable. Bare Metal foil makes dandy trim for chrome in this area also. The main problem is the stock body's "Turbine Bronze" color, which *Pactra* apparently once offered a solution to. Unless you know source for this paint, *JoHan's* recommended *Pactra* "diamond flake bronze mist #D-52," you'll have to make do. Reference material for coming up with a color match doesn't exactly abound in your local library.

A reference I found has two large color shots of a Turbine from the front and rear, and a lot of color details can be discerned from them. The car's interior appears to have much more of a bronze cast than the exterior painting, the grain of which must be very fine since the photo makes it look like an orangeish red with almost no hint of a metallic quality. The box art of the kit is too red and is misleading compared to real photos of the car, although the kit art is a shot of the real car.

There are eight cars of the 10 Chrysler paid for out there to see for reference. The Chicago Museum of Science & Industry has one, as did Harrah's Reno collection, though I don't know if that collection is still intact.

Besides just making your own scheme though, there are two other authentic finishes available. The five prototypes may or may not have all been painted white. I have a source that says that at least one was white, and that same reference states of the 50 others, all but one were bronze. One was white with blue racing stripes, and was used in the movie *The Lively Set*. So there's two more finishes by my count. I have seen in



**The ends of the Turbine were more exciting than the sides. The rear also suggested a jet aircraft.**

a car model magazine recently a promo kit of this car, so references must be available at least in the form of that model or pictures of it.

After losing my first turbine (painted in Champagne Gold Metallic with a black interior, because I chickened out on the stock colors) to our long-ago quake, I plan to finish a new one in a stock scheme. We'll see. Meantime, I hope you made through this article and that you at least look at getting one of these truly unique model kits to build for fun.

By the way, if you do build all the "Dream Car" kits I've covered here, you now have the minimum number of entries for the "collections" category for the IPMS!

**References (only ones I had, not necessarily the only ones out there)**

Instructions for kit GC-300 Chrysler Corp Turbine Car  
*Cars That Never Were—The Prototypes* by the editors of Consumer Guide, 1981 Beekman House Publication, USA.

The chapter "Turbine Tale" details 25 years of Chrysler turbines, with pages 34-35 covering the history of the 1963 models. The four photos are black and white, the most useful of which are the detail study of the front taken head-on and a dead-on drivers side view. It says here that Chrysler took two of the 10 Ghia cars home to its Chelsea proving grounds, and they may even still be there stashed in a garage! This thin 96-page book is worth finding if you enjoy discovering oddball automobiles.

*MOPAR - Dodge & Plymouth the Performance Years*, Quicksilver Supercar Series Vol 2, by Martyn L. Schorr, 1984. Motorbooks International. USA, \$8.95

Pages 8 and 9, covering "Chrysler's Turbine Bird," present the car in a different manner. The prototypes are featured in all the photos of the car, and the author is in one shot as he examines the mounted chromed example engine at a Special Press Preview in 1963. Data on the true number and nature of the 1963 cars was gained here, as was my information on the "Lively Set" car being a production car, so the prototypes all were likely white and not bronze if the photos and the author are accepted as credible. All photo captions were added in 1984, while the text of the pages is actually a reprint of Chrysler's "marketing press kit" for the 1963 Turbine car.

*American Cars*, from Harrah's Automobile Collection, by

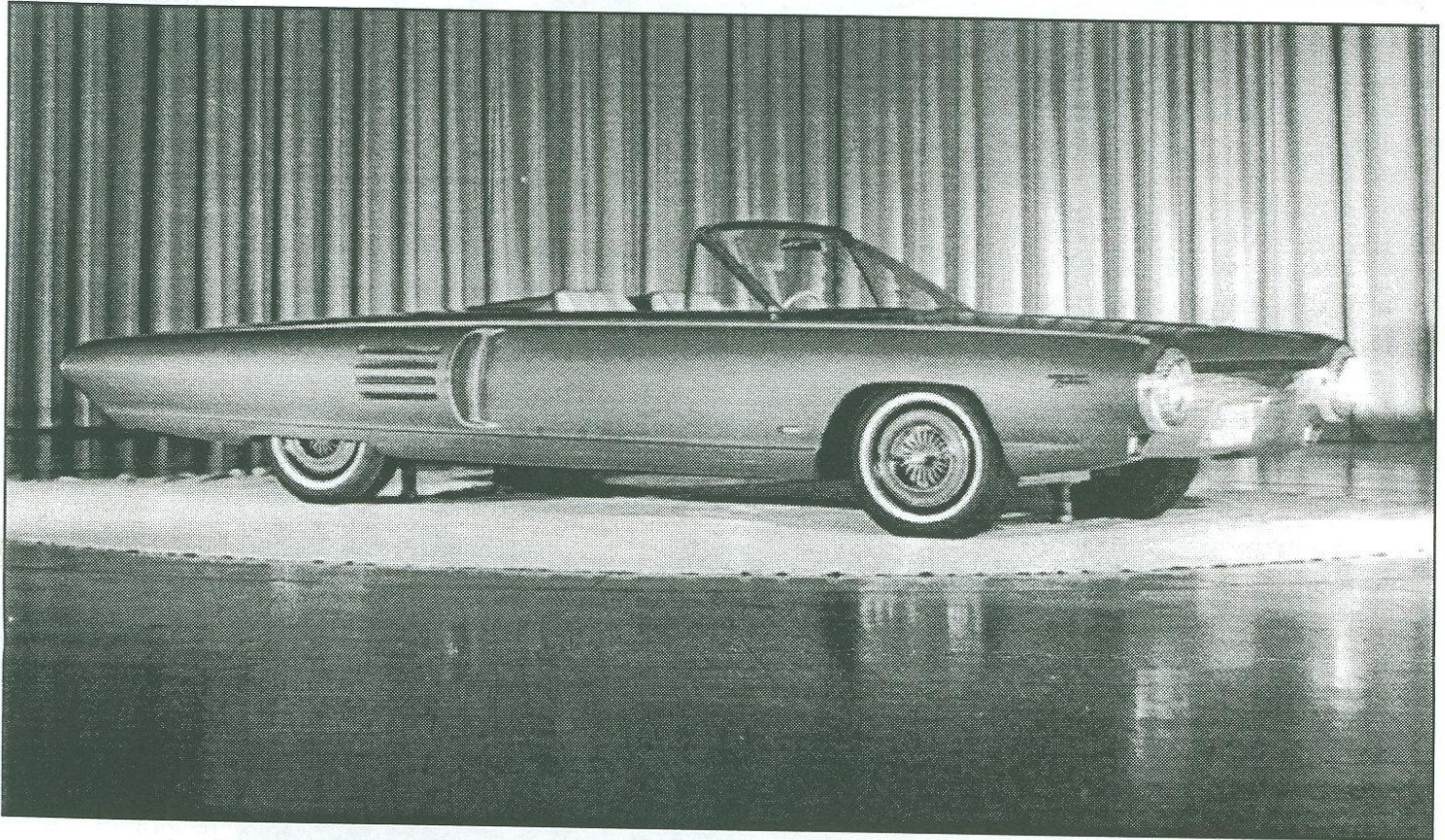
Leon Mandel. Stewart, Tabori & Chang Publishers, USA. 1982, \$25

While page 402 of this most excellent book has two color shots of the Turbine, I guarantee you the book is worth seeking out even if you have no interest in the Turbine car. If you or your kids ever want a truly comprehensive book about the automobile's impact upon America, GET THIS BOOK.

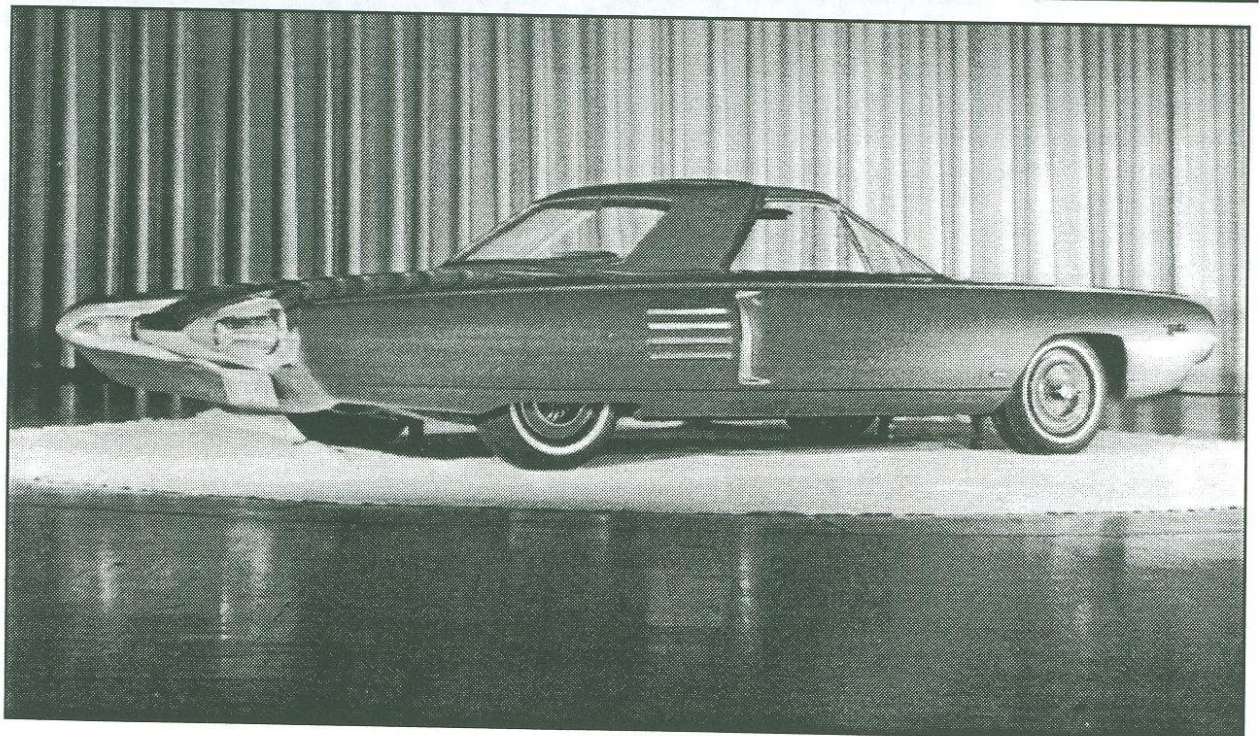
The author is a car maven, and he has much editorial and literary experience in the field. This knowledge is coupled with an extremely easy to read yet incisive style of writing.

Far from boring or cheerleading, his weaving in of the people and events could seem controversial but never is. He just makes you think, and his way of enlivening history chapter by chapter is fascinating.

## Another body style for the jet car for the masses



**A Turbine of a different color, the concept convertible. Chrysler kept up work on the development of a turbine-powered passenger car until 1981, when it finally scrapped the project during the company's hard financial times.**



# Bringing Hasegawa's 1:32 Hornet up to date

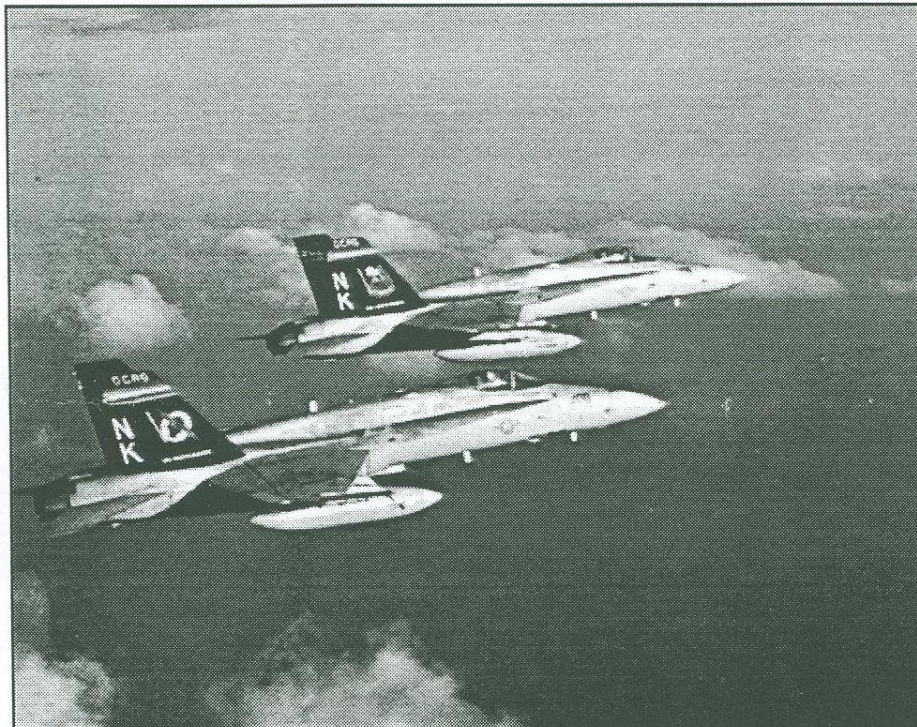
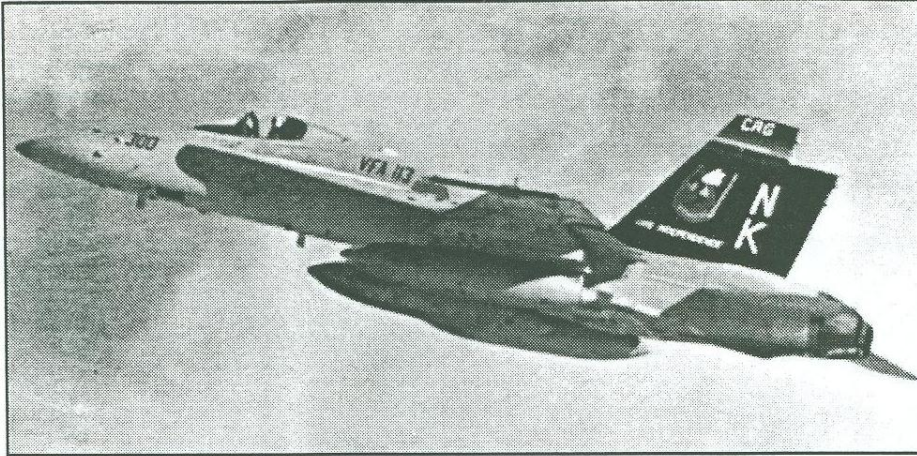
By Milt Poulos

I started this long and difficult project late last year before my son, Alexander James, was born. My timing to start a project of this magnitude could not have been worse. He is now eight months old and I am just finishing the F/A-18C *Hornet*, my fifth aircraft to date and first major aircraft conversion. I do have some experience converting tanks, though.

Hasegawa's F/A-18, produced in 1980, is a very clean-fitting model with raised panellines. Modeled on the factory prototype, it has the long LEX (Leading Edge Extensions) slots on the forward fuselage, which McDonnell Douglas filled in to improve roll stability. McDonnell Douglas also made modifications to improve air flow over the tails, which were developing metal fatigue early on during trials. All these improvements needed to be added to accurately model a production F/A-18C.

An excellent cockpit and air brake are nice features, but the kit suffers from inaccurate main landing gear and very short air inlets. When I started, I had almost everything on hand, including superbly cast resin parts by Xtraparts for the LEX slots and the air flow fences. Oddly missing from Xtraparts' update set are the outboard tail braces that are supposed to bolt to the inner braces. These can be scratch built with .010 sheet plastic and rivets made from stretched sprue.

Xtraparts' update set is the best fitting etched metal and resin set I have ever used on a model. It contains lots of resin and photo etched brass parts to accurately convert Hasegawa's F/A-18 factory roll-out prototype to the F/A-18C that entered service in 1989. The set includes fillets, air vents, grilles, ejection seat, canopy details, gun port, HUD, weapon pylons, search light, flare launchers and lots of antenna fairings.



At top, VFA-113's CAG bird during Operation Desert Shield. Below, VFA-25's CAG plane flies in formation. From 1990 until this year, all of Air Wing 13's squadrons had a black-tailed "double nuts" plane.

Another excellent buy are the Xtraparts bulged tires. Detailed instructions are provided that give exact measurements of where to locate the parts.

I cleared my workbench of all other model projects and covered my walls with reference material. I began by building the cockpit. I installed the photo-etched 'C' version CRT screens provided by Xtraparts and scratch built the switch panels surrounding the highly-detailed Martin Baker SJU-5/6 ejection seat. Painting consisted of spraying the panels gray-black, then masking with small pieces of tape and re-spraying the entire cockpit with medium gray (35237). I then picked out all detail with a 10/0 brush. Reheat 1:48 scale gauges fit perfectly

in the kit's raised bezels. A drop of Varathane Diamond Finish polymer finished the faces to a gloss.

I cut the brass rear deck plate away to reveal the flight data recorder and gun camera area. These parts were made of plastic square stock and connectors, and a mass of wiring was installed to "busy" the boxes up a bit. I installed a tulle (wedding veil) RF screen over the boxes as shown in my reference photos. Most of this work was hidden from view, unfortunately (sigh).

The clear canopy parts are over .040 inches thick and required successive sandings starting with 150 grit wet or dry through 1200 grit sandpaper, followed by polishing with Blue Magic and model car wax. I removed half the thickness of the clear plastic. It was a two day job in itself, but worth the effort as the original glazing would have distorted the entire cockpit.

I cut off the prototype's wing snags and faired in the resin



fillets with *Tamiya* putty. Now I faced the torturous task of sawing off the leading and trailing edge flaps. Since this kit is long out of stock in the U.S., I dreaded the task. I carefully repositioned the front flaps and spaced them to hang down about 20 degrees. I noticed in various photos that the control surfaces seem to set wherever they happen to be when the hydraulics shut down, so I hung the flaps to not appear too even. After sawing off the rear flaps I cast new larger ones in resin, as a big part of the *Hornet's* lift flaps are hidden inside the main wing. I fashioned hinges using the smallest I-beam *Plastruct* makes, again using my photos. I made the pieces removable with a male-female brass rod arrangement that actually worked, to my surprise. This would make it easier to transport this 21-inch behemoth to contests later.

At this point I lightly sanded off the raised panel lines and rescribed the entire plane using drawings in Bert Kinsey's *Detail and Scale F/A-18 Part 2*. I removed selected details and added some to bring my fighter up to production configuration. The small round vents on the port wing root proved very difficult to scratch build. I also made new doors to close the square exhaust vents next to the LEX fences. In every photo, these are always closed. Now I added all the brass and resin detail *Xtraparts* provided, including front cooling screens and gun ports for the nose. These are absent on the kit. I should note that they provide parts to make a Canadian bird too, right down to a different seat cushion and belts for the resin seat.

Now came time to add the resin LEX fillers and glue on the wings. I had to scratch build the wing gloves, because dropping the flaps left a gapping view into the fuselage. These were quite difficult and I had to take close up pictures of the actual plane to get these right. Lucky for me, there was an air show in Fresno and I took up residence under the wing of a Navy *Hornet* and carefully studied and measured all that was unclear to me. The model only required a little *Tamiya* filler to fair in the wings and brass parts. I was surprised how well everything fit considering how many saw cuts I had made on the poor thing.

At this point I had invested six months and close to \$200 in the model project that I thought would never end. The landing gear required two weeks work to cut and graft the old *Revell* F-18 main gear knuckle into the strut of the *Hasegawa* gear. I used some *On The Mark* brass tank parts that looked similar to the complex parts used on the *Hornet* gear and scratched the rest. I consider the landing gear the jewels of my model. It's too bad they are mostly hidden from view by the drop tanks.

I finally received the back-ordered *Xtracolor* light compass gray and the three drop tanks and FLIR pods I mail ordered. I had to paint the plane outdoors, as my spray booth was too small, since it was built for tank and car models. I used *Humbrol* gloss black on the tail, which I painted and decaled first. The markings were those of the colorful CAG (Commander Air Group) aircraft aboard the

*Constellation* in late 1989, when the VF-113 Stingers took delivery of their new 'C' variant. This meant I could model a *Hornet* without the hundred shades of primer gray and sea filth that adorns most carrier-borne fighter planes. It makes for one ugly model collection (*Hey, watch it, Milt! One man's ugly is another man's well-done modern U.S. Naval Aviation collection—hopefully, eventually, MINE!—the Editor*). I free hand camouflaged the compass grays using the gloss paint, and allowed two weeks to dry. I then used *SuperScale* decals throughout. I was very pleased with the way the company followed through on a defective decal sheet. I called, and

## 1:32 *Hornet* Data

Date Started: Sept. 20, 1995. Date Completed: May 1, 1996

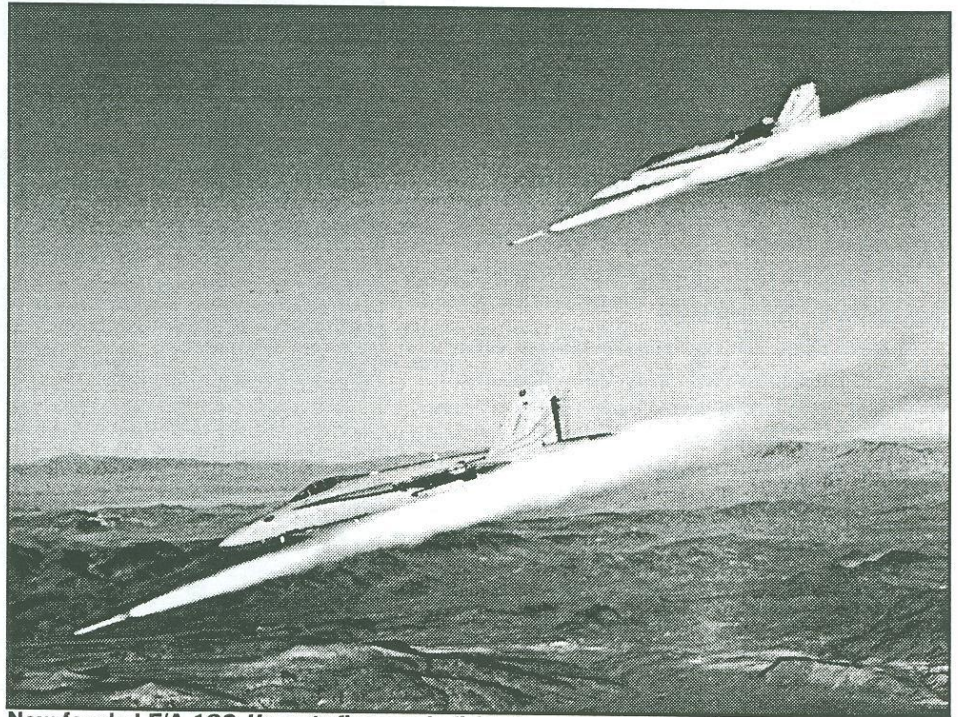
Kits Used: *Hasegawa* F/A-18A Prototype #8023, *Revell* F/A-18A #4707

After-Market Parts Used: *Xtraparts* F/A-18C conversion set XP3203, Bulged Wheel Set XP3207; *Paragon Designs* AN/ASQ 173 LST /SCAM Pod no. 3206 and AN/AAS-38 FLIR Pod no. 3205; *Reheat* Gauges and Pilot Figure RH015; *Model Technologies* F/A-18 access ladder MT070; *Tac Scale Dynamics* GBU-10 32002, MV Lenses.

Paints Used: *XtraColor* X135 dark compass gray, X136 light compass gray (main fuselage), X126 dark blue gray (anti glare panel); *Model Master* paints for interior cockpit and small details.

Decals Used: *SuperScale* sheet no. 32-84 and 32-48, VF-113 CAG and F-18 Low-Vis Data.

Scratch Built Items: trailing edge flaps and hinges, wing gloves, main landing gear, cockpit detail, wingtip lights, moving horizontal stabilizers and tail hook, flight data and video recorder, afterburner cans, VHF antennas, outboard tail braces, upper fuselage vents, tail antenna fairing.



New-fangled F/A-18C *Hornets* fire good ol' fashioned rockets on the Nevada range.

talked to a very pleasant individual named Kate and she rushed me several new sheets at no charge. *SuperScale* went above and beyond the call of customer service.

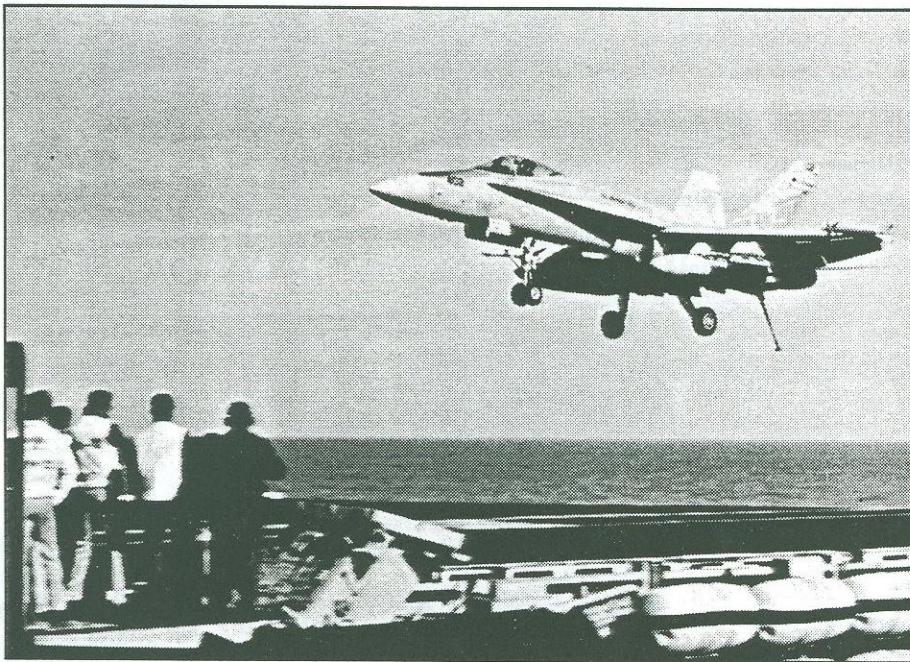
A wash of watercolors was slopped on and wiped off, staying only in the now-recessed panel lines. This was followed by the usual *Testors* Dull Cote. To achieve the rough, non-skid surface on the walkways, I sprayed them with a thick lacquer mix of *Model Master* gunship gray. I brushed on a little pastel weathering to show some wear on the aircraft, then re-applied Dull Cote to seal it.

At this point I turned the plane upside down and attached the four resin SUU-63 pylons *Xtraparts* supplied, along with the three drop tanks from *Paragon*. Next came the Navy-style GBU-10 bombs from *Tac Scale Dynamics*, complete with fire-retardant coating. I could not complete the war load without including *Paragon's* AN/AAS-38 FLIR pod and AN/ASQ-173 Laser Spot Tracker or LST/SCAM pod, that happen to be built by my LORAL Aerospace employer.

I have painted the beautifully-cast pilot from *Reheat* to mount on a barely adequate 21x16 inch mirror.

Now that it is complete, I hear that *Tamiya* may release a 1/32 F/A-18 soon. It figures. That's modeling, Milt, get used to it. The main thing is that I learned how to plan a conversion and work through a difficult

project, and, at the same time, my son was born. We are modeling to learn and enjoy. A *Tamiya* kit would teach me nothing. I also know I will never see other 1/32 scale *Hornet*, on the same table, at a contest, as I did with my F-15E. When I stand back and look at that massive *Hornet*, it is simply breathtaking. I can not help it, I love big airplanes. Then again, all this work has made me want to build an "out of the box" car model. Until the next time....Happy Modeling!



An F/A-18 comes aboard ship, under the watchful eye of the LSOs.

## Converting a 1:72 Stouff into a CDF firebomber

Continued from Page 1

the decals for me, but that would have cost big bucks for some small decals. Even without professionally-made shields, the decals cost more than the kit.

With a small amount of easy modifications and some custom decals, the kit built into a unique model. If I were to build it again, I would do the following differently:

- Paint with flat white instead of gloss white for better paint coverage and fewer runs (never again!).
- Be more generous with the putty when filling holes in the fuselage.
- Remember to weight the fuselage before gluing the sides together. Shoving solder and RTV through little holes is not very fun, and I could have avoided that little chunk of solder deciding to sit in the co-pilot's seat.

My fire-fighting fleet hasn't stopped growing. I need to clear coat my O-2, decal it and I'll have my forward air control plane. Next comes the *Italeri* C-119, the *Heller* DC-6 and the *Hasegawa Huey*. I guess I could also buy a *Bronco* while I'm at it.

Happy Modeling—and remember, only you can prevent forest fires!



S-2 with the standard CDF markings (red tail and wingtips and band around fuselage) completes a run.

# APRIL MINUTES

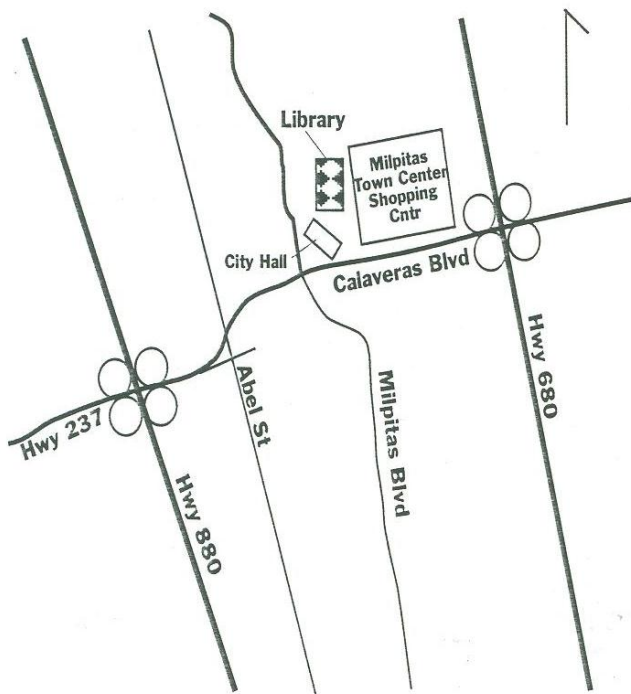
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April's meeting started with the presentation of the first annual Tim Curtis Award for Service to Silicon Valley Scale Modelers to Bruce McBride. This award will be awarded annually to the non-officer who has done the most for the club, and Bruce certainly did a lot. His coordination of the VA Hospital Model drive boosted contributions from a respectable 300 to 447—a donation valued at \$2999 by the VA Hospital people. Congratulations and thanks, Bruce!

Stan Muniz is looking for data on the Antonov An-225 for a friend, who has a photo of the plane on the wall that draws numerous questions about its mammoth size that he can't answer!

In model talk, Tom Bush showed his chopped '50 Ford pickup in an airplane-scale, built from *Monogram's* 1:48 lil' kit. Rodney Williams proudly displayed his *Monogram* M-47 Patton tank, complete with SnJ aluminum paint below its faded olive drab finish. Rodney's also involved in some heavy-duty detailing of some P-40 landing gear. Jim Priete used *Floquil* Prussian blue rather than *Humbrol's* PR blue for his photo-recon *Spitfire* Mk XIX; he gave the *Fujimi* 1:72 kit a new resin propeller and added appropriate bump to the wings. Jim Gordon wrestled *Twelve Squared's* WWI Floh into a shadow of its former self (i.e., a good-fitting, great-looking model) and parked it on a tile—a perfect-sized base for the diminutive fighter. Jim also converted a V-1 flying bomb into a Me 163-style bomber destroyer, complete with take-off dolly, and did a masterful job on his 1:700 U.S.S. *Cleveland* WWII cruiser. Cliff Kranz, in cahoots with his inner child, took the little 1:48 *Monogram* pickup and built it in all of a hour. Sami Arim took the *Skywave* Gato-class submarine and Japanese destroyer escort and spruced them up with *Tom's Modelworks* detail parts, causing numerous club members to strain their eyes over the course of the evening. Hubert Chan is getting tanked—he's tackling a DML M-46 instead of the usual wheeled military subjects he's shown us lately. Peter Wong is joining the silent service with a Gato-class sub of his own, this one built from the large *Revell* kit. He's also building a replica of a late-model British Centurion tank. Mark Cohen applied a bright coat of red to his Dodge Viper, which was built from the *AMT* kit. Laramie Wright has gone from tank builder to tank buster, mounting a TOW launcher on his M113. He used the *Tamiya* kit and added an *Azimut* conversion kit to detail his APC. Laramie's also building a T-34/85 from the *Revell* kit. Tom Trankle is diving into *Hasegawa's* 1:48 Stuka, adding the *Eduard* detail set and *True Details* wheels to his Ju 87. Mike Burton (or Dan Bunton, as he is known in some parts) finished his *MPM* XP-47H Chrysler-built *Thunderbolt* in time to take an award at the Fresno show. He also showed off a clean *Hasegawa* P-47D to show the differences between the two Republic stablemates. Bruce McBride's more interesting projects take a little time to explain in their early stages, and this was so for the armature for the sabre-tooth tiger he's sculpting. It's made of Sculpey over a plastic rod skeleton. Mac McKinnistry is making a silk purse from a sow's ear, adding drop tanks and an ejection seat from an OA-4M *Skyhawk* to improve the old *Hawk* 1:72 F4D *Skyray* kit. Stan Muniz used Fun-Tac clay to hold the wings of his *Tom's Modelworks* Nieuport 11 in place to ensure proper alignment.

He also cut the hole for the observer and used the kit-provided skis to give the resin kit good footing. Rick Yokogawa added home-made hand-grabs and *Verlinden* dry transfers to detail his *DML* JS-2 self-propelled gun, and his *F7F Tigercat* by *Monogram* is awaiting wheels, props, decals and canopy (in other words, it's almost done!). Rich Pedro's got his hands full with his 1:6 figure of Goro—it's got six hands to choose from! Rich has also finished the *AMT* vinyl Darth Vader, which he says has a static-looking pose to it. He showed the *Screamn'* 1:4 Darth Vader for comparison. Brad Chun usually frowns on speeding in his job, but in his free time he's building a *Monogram* Chevy supertruck racer. He's also tackling his first vacu-form, a *Koster* 1:48 Ju 88. Brad stole the cockpit and engines from the *DML* Mistel and the nightfighter radar from a *Monogram* Me 262. Speaking of that kit, Dave Balderrama is building a late war Me 262, which will appear in a very-late-war natural metal scheme. He's also finished work on his *Macross* Stealth Valkyrie. Shane Johnson has tricked out his '32 Ford with carburetors from a Dodge, wheels off an S10 pickup and Volvo turn signals. Kent McClure reports fit problems between the wings and fuselage of the new *Hasegawa* Hurricane, but he says it's still easier than the old *Airfix* effort. Chris Bucholtz has the chassis for his 1:25 Peterbilt wrecker complete and on its wheels; he says the *Revell* kit is difficult at best. Less difficult was the *AFV Club* Knox-class frigate in 1:700, which he built as his own ship, the U.S.S. *Gray*. Somewhere in the middle is the *Matchbox* F9F-5 *Panther*, which he's rescribing. Eric McClure's getting back into the vacu-form business, taking X-Acto to plastic in building his Hs 132 from *Airframe*. He also displayed a 1:48 Floh from a vacu-form kit. Ben Pada added the *Jaguar* detail set to his Macchi 202 by *Hasegawa*; he painted the Italian bird with *Gunze Sangyo* paints, as he did for his *Fujimi* Me 109, his *Minicraft* P-47N and his *Tamiya* Mustang. Kelly Avery took a foray into civil aviation with his Beech Staggerwing and Stinson Reliant, both built from ex-*AMT* molds. He also prettied up a *Hasegawa* SBD *Dauntless* in the Atlantic gray scheme. Matt Reich had two *Mustangs*, a P-51B in Don Gentile's markings and a P-51D that lost its canopy somewhere. Matt's also working on the *Monogram* B-25J, a *Lindberg* GMC Jimmy truck and an *AMT* Camaro. Richard Draga decloaked his Klingon Bird of Prey kit (yeah, I know about the difference between Klingons and Romulans. "Just repeat to yourself, 'it's just a show, I should really just relax.'"). Mike Ackerman's WWI collection is growing, with the addition of a Fokker DVII, an Albatross with colored-pencil wood grain, a *Merlin* Nieuport 27 with a resin cowling and *Aeroparts* guns, a *Pegasus* Siemens Schuckert DVIII and an *Aeroclub* Bristol Scout! Ralph Patino is building a 1:144 scratchbuilt Graf Zeppelin, the nose of which made an appearance, and a scratchbuilt 1:25 SdKfz 232 armored car (armor modelers, beware!) Larry Roberts said his Me 109s, while in authentic markings, look sort of incomplete, lacking wing insignia on one and fuselage markings on the other. And the Model of the Month goes to... Bill Shipway, who painted his *Horizon* Elasmosaurus in the dark! What better way to get an idea of what the creature really looked like at home in the murky depths!

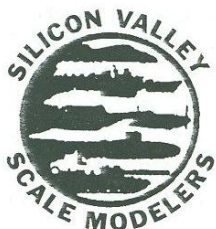


Next meeting:  
**7:30 p.m.,  
Friday,  
May 17**

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