

## Turning MPC's kit into an accurate X-Wing

By Mike Yamada

Like the British *Spitfire* of World War Two, the Incom T-65 X-Wing fighter is the main space superiority fighter of the Rebel Forces of the *Star Wars* movie universe. Designed by

special effects model designer Joe Johnston, the X-Wing is a single seat fighter, with one pilot plus one R2 droid. The ship's length is 12.5 meters. Armament consists of four Taim & Bak KX9 laser cannons mounted on the ends of articulated wings that deploy into an "X" shape when viewed from the front or rear. The X-Wing is also armed with eight proton torpedoes launched from two Krupx MG7 Proton Torpedo Launchers mounted on the sides of the fuselage.

Hyperspace-capable propulsion is generated by a Novaldex 04-Z power generator and four Incom 4L4 fusial thrust engines. For defense, the X-Wing uses a Chempat "Defender" deflector screen projector.

The X-Wing "Red Five" (identified by five red stripes painted on the wings) was piloted by Luke Skywalker during the successful attack on the Death Star in *Star Wars* Episode IV, *A New Hope*, as well as Episode V, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and Episode VI, *Return of the Jedi*.

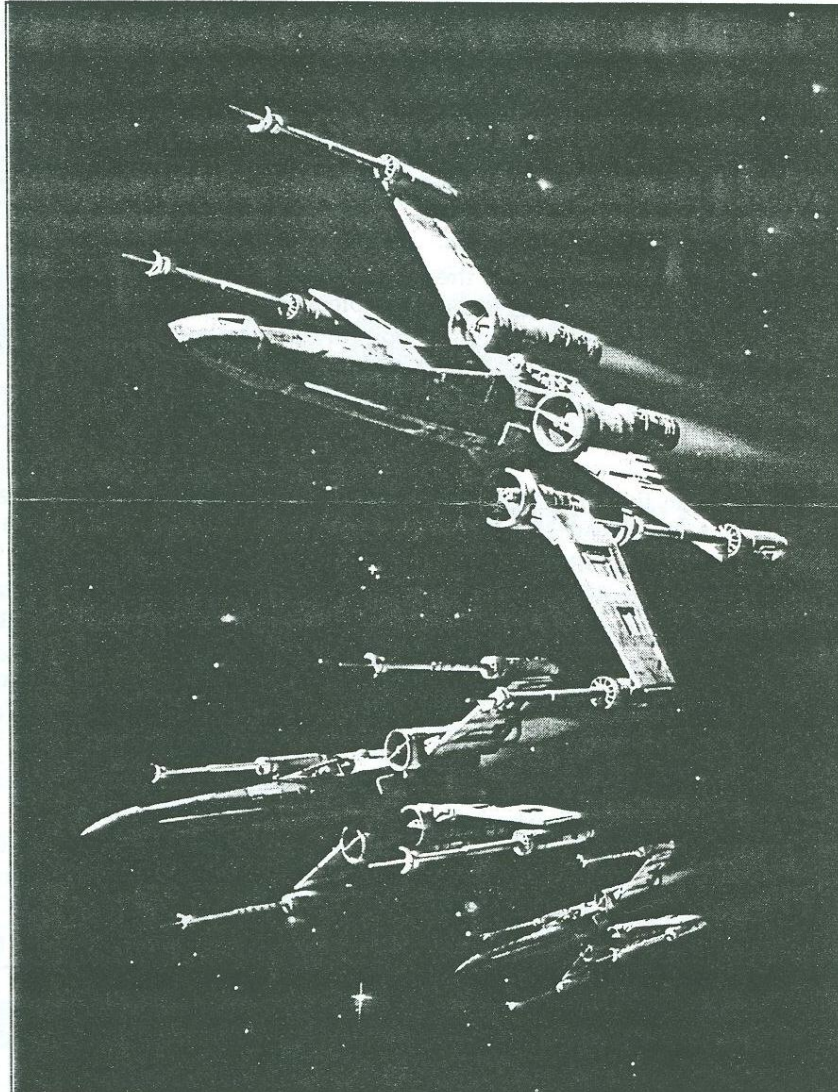
After seeing the theatrical re-releases of the *Star Wars* trilogy, I was fired up to build an X-Wing for my collection. I had been able to obtain one of the now out-of-production *Argonauts* multimedia kits (\$78!). However, when I compared

the *Argonauts* kit with the MPC snap kit (\$7), I could tell the *Argonauts* kit, as nice as it is, was based on the MPC kit with additional details added, including a vinyl one-piece fuselage, resin X-wings, cast metal laser cannons and landing

gear. I wanted to see if I could improve my scratchbuilding techniques in order to do my own "accurization" of the MPC kit.

The MPC kit is basically accurate in outline and dimensions, based on the various drawings I have seen. It is however, simplified for easy assembly, and could be improved in several areas.

Based on my study of the references, including the movies on videotape, photos and blueprints in books, and photos I took of the actual filming models when they were displayed in San Francisco a few years ago, I found that there were several different models used in the movie's filming: several smaller ones that were about two feet long, and a large-scale one that is 1.45 meters long. I decided to use the large-scale model as my prototype, even though it is actually marked as



Three X-Wings peel off to attack in the first *Star Wars* film. Study of the real studio models helped Mike improve his model.

"Red Three." I believe stripes were added or deleted as needed for the different shots used in the movie.

The configuration of the red stripe on the port side of the fuselage matched the movie still of Luke's Red Five X-wing

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## EDITOR'S BRIEF

After encouraging people to attend contests in last month's newsletter, the Editor is most sheepish to admit that he missed the Sacramento contest on Dec. 5. Hey, it was the first one missed in more than two years—some slack is due! Randy Ray, however, did go to the capitol and he thoughtfully put the experience into words. I turn the floor over to Randy...

After waking up to Mike Burton's phone call at 7 a.m. (and pretending on the phone to have been already up and around), I hopped into the shower and was dressed and ready when he arrived in a rented Volvo station wagon at 7:30. A stop by an ATM and donut shop (in that order) and we were off to Sacramento.

The drive up was pretty uneventful, save for Mike not being 100 percent sure of the directions he had gotten through the Yahoo! website, all this in order to avoid going over the bridge on I-680. Along the way he regaled me with tales of the juicier historical bits from various cities along the way (such as Stockton, etc.).

When we got there, the vendors area was already hopping. Mike had hoped to get a small vendor table to sell some wares and show his almost-finished slideshow presentation of the Nationals winners. Alas, there was no room at that end of the inn, and so we settled for just registering our models and browsing the offerings of the vendors who did make it in time. We took note as other SVSM faces such as Ray Lloyd, Jim Lewis and Joe Fleming all showed up (and others, I'm sure, whom I forget).

Though I don't have numbers available, the contest turnout was pretty good for a local show—not as large as the regional a few months back in Vallejo, but still a nice enough turnout that one aircraft category and one armor category warranted splits. Mike and I ducked out for lunch before they started drafting judges. When we got back, they had just started their second round of door-prize drawings. Out of the 20 tickets I bought for \$10, no less than nine were pulled and called. I finally quit going forward after the seventh number was called, and handed off my remaining tickets to Mike who proceeded to win two more times. After they finished the drawing, they handed out awards.

Though both Mike and I had consigned ourselves to having just entered for the "fun of it," we were surprised to bring

home some brass after all. Mike's Campini Caproni won 3rd in the 1:72 jets category. Ray Lloyd took 1st and 3rd in 1:48 jets for his Saudi Arabian Hawker *Hunter* and Iraqi Su-22. My V-1 Buzz Bomb snuck in at 2nd place.

The Fully Armored Vehicle category got split into "heavy" and "light," thus giving even more awards to Joe Fleming. Joe swept the "heavy" split, though I don't recall exactly which entries he had. In the "light" split, Joe took 1st and 2nd (one of which was for his T-60), and my PzKpfw 35t snuck in at 3rd, preventing a total sweep. In the Semi-Armored Vehicle class, Jim Lewis' M-8 Greyhound took 1st place, then went on to take Best of Show. Lastly, in the Softskins and Unarmored Vehicles, my Flak 38 anti-aircraft gun (placed here for lack of a dedicated artillery category) took another 2nd.

If there were other SVSM folks there, especially if there were winners I've missed, I apologize. All in all, a good time and worth the trip. A nice distraction from my usual Saturday fare of running errands and cleaning house.

Don't forget that January is the month when all members dues are payable. You can re-up for next year at the December Christmas bash or at the January meeting, but whatever you do, please stay current. The club is larger than it's ever been—roughly 80 members—and the dues we pay is given back to the members in the form of the Kickoff Classic, the club contests and the Styrene Sheet. The meeting space at the Milpitas Public Library costs us money, too. But, because we've had such a loyal and dependable membership, we've not been plagued by the kind of budgetary problems other clubs seem to suffer from. Bravo to all of you, and keep it up.

Another round of congratulations goes out to all of you who have given to the Veterans Hospital Model Drive, and all of you who will before it ends at the end of the holiday season. Nothing we do has such a positive impact on this drive; the models we donate help veterans get started on their way back from illness, help them pass the time while recovering, or help them connect with grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Frank Beltran is this year's head sled dog—bring him a model and thank him for his hard work!

I hope to see all of you at the December meeting, and I hope that the holidays find your stocking stuffed with styrene!

—The Editor

*To submit stories, letters, requests for help,  
or wants and disposals to the*

## STYRENE SHEET

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Box 361644 Milpitas, CA  
or, by E-mail, to bucholtzc@aol.com*

## CONTEST CALENDAR

February 13/14: **NNL Western Nationals and West Coast Model Expo**, at the San Mateo County Fairgrounds. For information, go to [www.zoomie.com/nnl.html](http://www.zoomie.com/nnl.html)

February 28: **1999 Kickoff Classic Model Contest**, sponsored by Silicon Valley Scale Modelers, at the Milpitas Community Center. Theme: "Gone But Not Forgotten." For more information call Chris Bucholtz at (408) 723-3995 or e-mail him at [bucholtzc@aol.com](mailto:bucholtzc@aol.com).



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# Revell-Monogram revives its classic *Marauder*

By Bradley D. Chun

At first one of the most maligned combat aircraft ever developed, the Martin B-26 *Marauder* overcame its early troubles to become one of World War II's most successful medium bombers. In response to the Army Air Corps request for a medium high performance bomber, Martin designers envisioned an aircraft that had a cylindrical fuselage and

short, tapered wings. Even though this design was capable of high speeds and agility, the *Marauder* possessed some serious take-off and landing deficiencies and proved to be a handful for inexperienced pilots. The B-26 were soon considered a "hot" aircraft and required a higher level of training to

be flown safely. It was a formidable weapon in the hands of a skilled pilot, but in the hands of the inexperienced, the B-26's high wing loading, high landing speed and other unpleasant characteristics made it easy to get into trouble. Many B-26s were lost in training accidents, especially early in the plane's career.

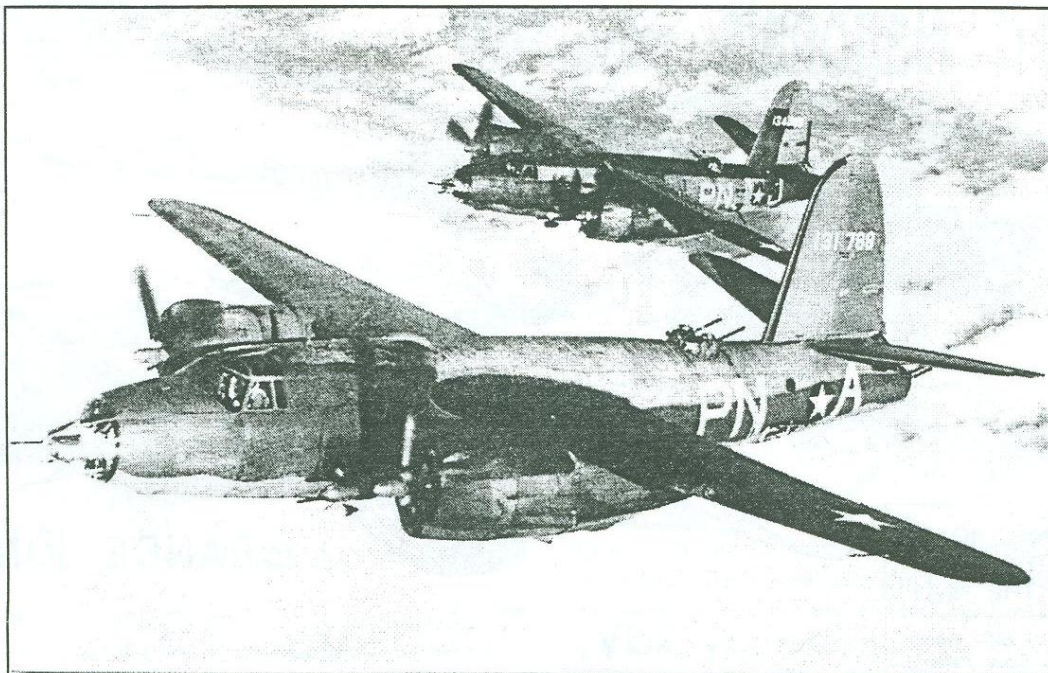
Reports from combat and training units were studied by Martin engineers, who introduced changes to succeeding *Marauders* even while they were still on the assembly line. Aware of the persistent take-off and landing problems, Martin engineers decreased the wing loading by increasing the area of the wings, tail, and horizontal stabilizers. This change was incorporated into the B-26B-10 and subsequent airframes.

Over 5,100 *Marauders* were built between February 1941 and March 1945, 522 of which went to the RAF and Royal South African Air Force for service in the Mediterranean Theater. The rugged *Marauders* saw action flying a variety of missions, acting as torpedo-bombers, long-range fighters, ground support aircraft, and tactical bomber. From their initial combat debut in April 1942, B-26s served continuously on all fronts and in all theaters. Despite intense combat, and the early faults that earned the plane the nicknames of "Widow Maker" and "Baltimore Whore," by the end of the war, B-26 *Marauder* crews had the lowest loss rate of any allied aircraft operating over Europe.

One aircraft, the 9<sup>th</sup> Air Force's "Flak Bait," became the first B-26 bomber to complete 200 combat missions. Even more amazingly, "Flak Bait" survived the war with more than 300 patches on her wings and fuselage. These patches covered over 1,000 flak and projectile holes. The National Air and Space Museum has the forward fuselage of "Flak Bait" on display, the rest of the aircraft is in storage, and the two halves will be assembled

in approximately five years when the new Dulles Airport facility is ready.

I remember when this kit was first released in 1978. At that time, this kit was considered state of the art, along with *Monogram's* other 1:48 kits of the B-17G *Flying Fortress*, B-24 *Liberator* variants, and the B-25 *Mitchell* variants. Even though the molds are 20



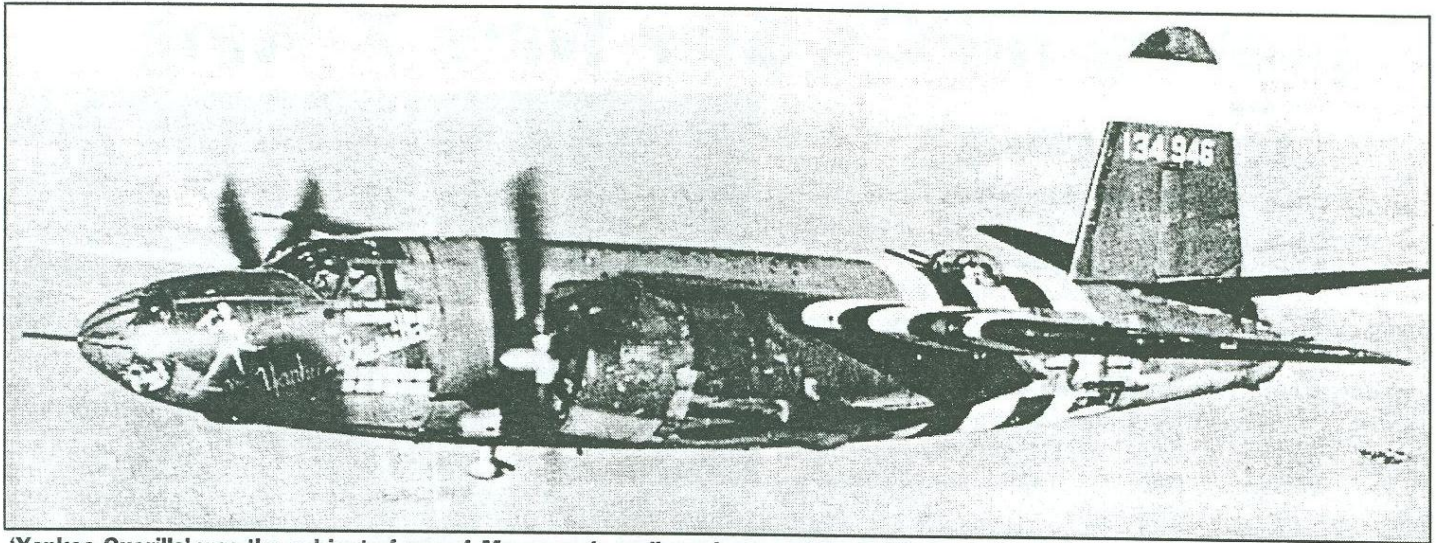
These 449<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron *Marauders* have the short vertical tails that distinguish B-26B-10 and earlier models.

years old, this kit really hasn't begun to show its age. In fact, if this kit didn't have the raised detail, one would never know it was 20 years old. One of the *Revell-Monogram* representatives at the 1998 IPMS Nationals showed me a flyer announcing the impending release of this kit, and I knew I just had to build another one for nostalgic purposes.

The *Revell-Monogram* reissue tries very hard to bring this kit up to date in ways beyond the new-style flimsy box it's packed in. The comprehensive 16-page pictorial instruction booklet is reminiscent of *Revellogram's* ProModeler line of kit's instruction booklets. It contains the usual brief history of the aircraft, painting guide, 12-step assembly process, and a decal placement section. The assembly steps clearly denotes where the modeler will need to either modify an existing kit part, or replace the designated kit parts for the corresponding resin detail parts. Also included in this "Special Edition" release is the option of two different tail gun configurations. One item that is missing from the instructions, and something that I would of liked to have seen, are the black and white photos *Revellogram* usually includes in their ProModeler instructions.

The four sprues of injection molded parts are the same as they were when this kit was first released in 1978 ("Flak Bait"), and it's subsequent re-issue in 1991 ("Yankee Guerrilla"). There was surprisingly little flash to be found (not what I'd of expected from a kit that's 20 years old), but there are the usual sink holes and ejector pin marks to be found. None of these will be





'Yankee Guerilla' was the subject of one of *Monogram's* earlier releases of the B-26. The plane belonged to the 386th Bomb Group.

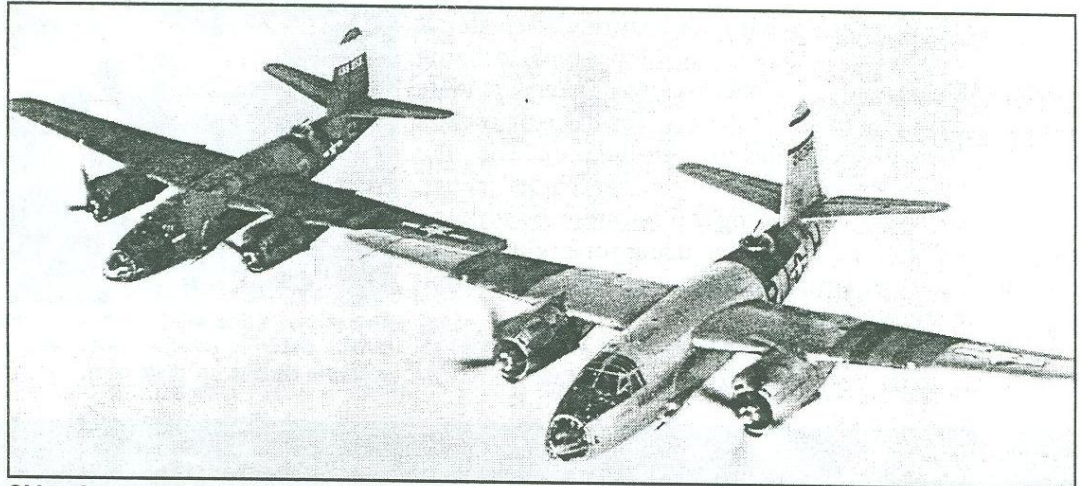
seen after construction. The panel lines and surface detail are of the raised variety, but are still nice, crisp and fine. The clear parts are also very clear and crisp, and no flash was found on this sprue.

As noted in the instructions, parts are included to build either the rounded tail found on the later -B and -C series B-26 airframes, or the pointed tail of the earlier -B series B-26 airframes. This kit has an airframe that was produced with the larger tail surfaces and longer wingspan, introduced with the B-26B-10 series, the most common variant. The modeler also has the original options of fuselage-mounted package guns, open/closed rear window/gun ports, and open/closed bomb bay doors. (Note: if closing the rear window/gun port, the support ladder will not be used and suitable weight must be placed in the nose area.) Also included are the original three crew figures, one standing crewmember, and two seated crew members (pilot and copilot).

This kit is a "Special Edition" release. What makes this kit "special" is the inclusion of resin detail parts. This is a first for *Revell-Monogram*. The resin detail parts are included in a small bag containing 20 parts. A slip of paper in the bag says the parts are made in the Czech Republic. These parts include cockpit floor details, cockpit sidewall panels, enclosed nose gear bay, main gear bay bulkheads and parts for the upper gun turret. The resin parts are nicely detailed and well molded. Although not up to the standards we expect from *Cooper Details*, they are comparable to *KMC* or *Verlinden*. The resin detail parts are a great improvement over kit parts they replace. Also included are two machine gun barrels for the upper turret machine guns. Too bad *Revell-Monogram* didn't include replacement barrels in the kit for all of the machine guns. (I guess I'll have to buy a few more *Verlinden* resin WWII U.S.

MGs sets.)

Included are decals for three B-26 *Marauders*. Coincidentally, all three operated out of Italy in 1944. The first choice the modeler has is "Thumper II," a natural-metal B-26C-25, serial number 42-107783, from the 441<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron, 320<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 42<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Wing, 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force. "Miss Manchester" is an OD/Gray B-26B-50, ser. number. 42-95884, from the 441<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron, 320<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 42<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Wing, 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force. "Miss Mary" is an OD/Gray B-26B-16, ser. number 41-3651, from the 553<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron, 386<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 9<sup>th</sup> Air Force. "Miss Mary" carries the pointed tail gun position. The



Old and new with the 454th Bomb Squadron: a short-tailed olive drab B-26B forms on a tall-tailed B-26C in natural metal.

decals are silk-screened and I could find no problems with registration. I might actually use kit provided decals for a change!

*Revell-Monogram's* update of its classic B-26 *Marauder* kit is a very good deal indeed. It's certainly worth the \$23.00 retail hobby shop price, considering the inclusion of the resin detail parts. Those modelers suffering from AMS will no doubt want to add photo-etch detail parts or other resin detail parts and tires/wheels to super detail this kit a bit further. As for myself, and maybe a few others, I'll probably build the kit out-of-the-box with few additions. I look forward to building this kit again!



# Improving MPC's Star Wars X-Wing

Continued from page 1

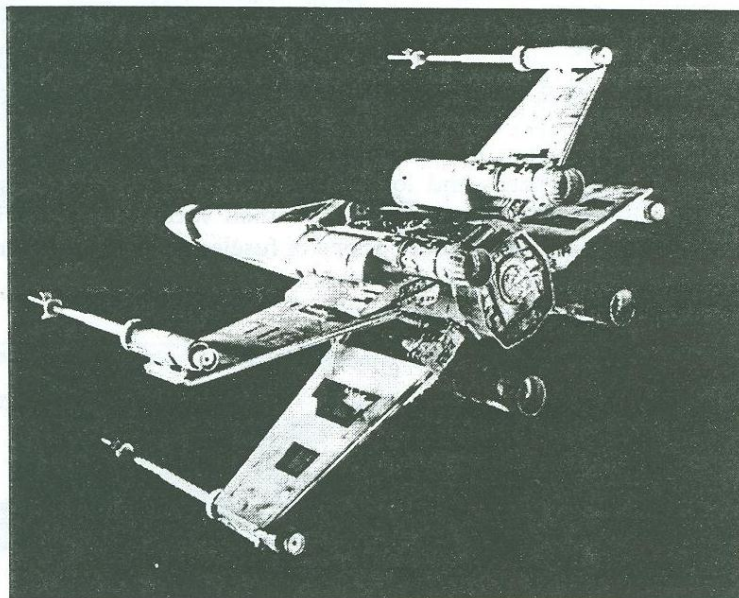
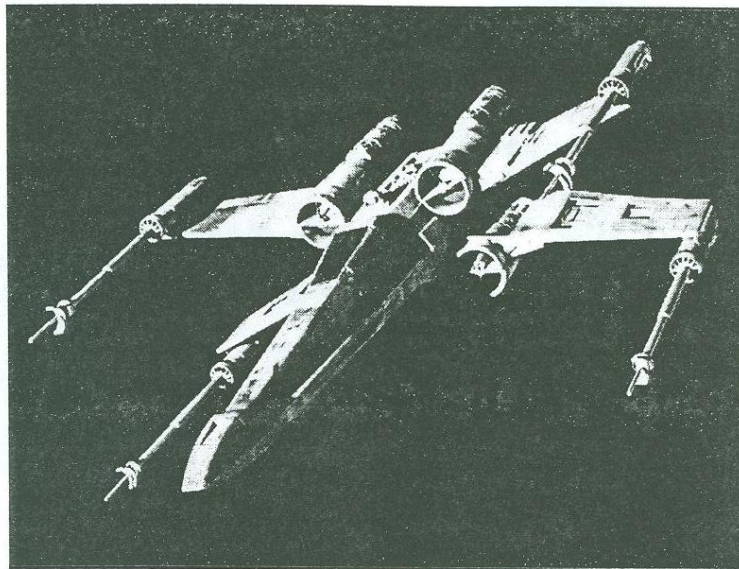
shown in the book *Famous Spaceships of Fact and Fantasy*, so this large model actually "is" Red Five. It was also apparent that *Argonauts* had access to the real shooting models when they did their improvements to the MPC kit, as several of their details matched the prototype closely.

To improve the MPC kit, at first I thought all I'd need to do was scratchbuild a cockpit and add new laser cannon shields. However, the more I studied my references, the more things I found that were not up to par! This is called AMS, or "Advanced Modelers' Syndrome," which is what happens when you're never satisfied with the available kit and keep working on it forever. I think another term for AMS would be "Add More Stuff!"

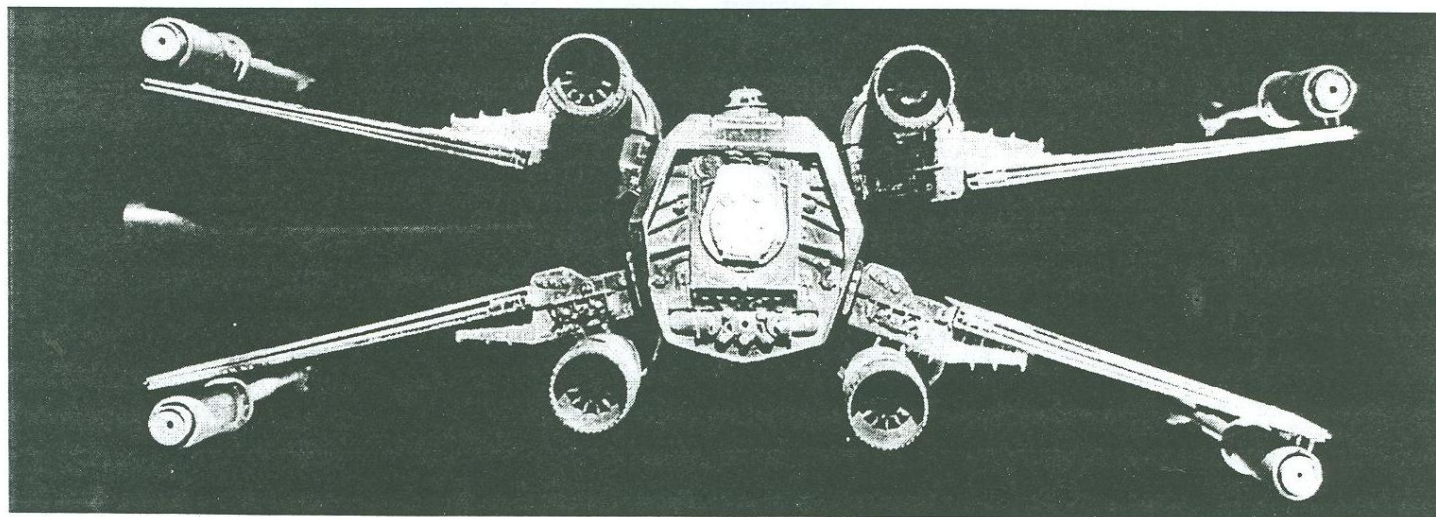
Here are the improvements I made to the MPC kit:

In the cockpit, I removed the "blob" of a pilot figure and added a host of details. These included a better pilot, a cockpit floor, consoles, seat, aft bulkhead, aft "package tray" behind the pilot's head, and the lower half of the R2 unit. I removed the excess material from the solid-molded rear cockpit windows and fabricated "glassless" canopy frames, since some of the shooting models had no glass in order to eliminate unwanted reflections while shooting the movies. I used my motor tool to remove the molded-in pilot figure and sheet styrene to fabricate a cockpit floor, aft bulkhead, and the "package tray" along with "targeting computer" behind the pilot's head. It was necessary to extrapolate a logical arrangement based on the differing artist's conceptions and what little I know about aircraft construction. The seat was a simple "high g-force reclining couch" type seat made from sheet styrene. I used a pin vise and small drill bits to start the holes for the rear cockpit windows, then jewelers' files to open them up. The pilot figure was from the *MicroMachines* "Rebel Pilots" series, modified from original standing configuration by cutting a wedge out of his midsection, then using super glue to glue him into seated configuration. The lower half of the R2 unit is a piece of styrene tubing.

An anti-glare shield was made from sheet styrene; its relationship to the rest of the cockpit was matched to the



Two views of the studio model provide a good view of the many small details added by studio modelmakers. Modelers will have to add many of these details on their own.



A rear view of the studio model shows details of the engines. Are those F-4 Phantom engines that propel the X-Wing?



swamp on Dagobah and the open cockpit is shown, as well as the design of the *Argonauts* kit piece. Consoles were added to the sides of the cockpit, and hoses made from steel guitar string were added around the pilot's seat. Some structure behind the pilot seat (I call this the "package shelf") was made from styrene stock.

Using the *Argonauts* kit as a guide, new laser cannons were fabricated from brass and styrene tube stock, cut using a razor saw and a miter box. This is a great tool to have in order to produce uniform sized pieces cut at right angles. There are some parts on the cannons that look like they were made from gears of some kind. I found some HO-scale locomotive drive gears that looked close after they were wrapped in styrene

tubing. I cut the outer wing panels off and replaced them with new wings made from sheet styrene. The air intake vanes were added using strip styrene.

The large filming model looks like it uses 1:32 J79 engines (from the old *Revell Phantom* model?) kitbashed to form the aft ends of the engines. Interestingly, in 1:72 scale, J79 afterburner cans (from a Fujimi F-4E kit) fit the drawings very closely as well.

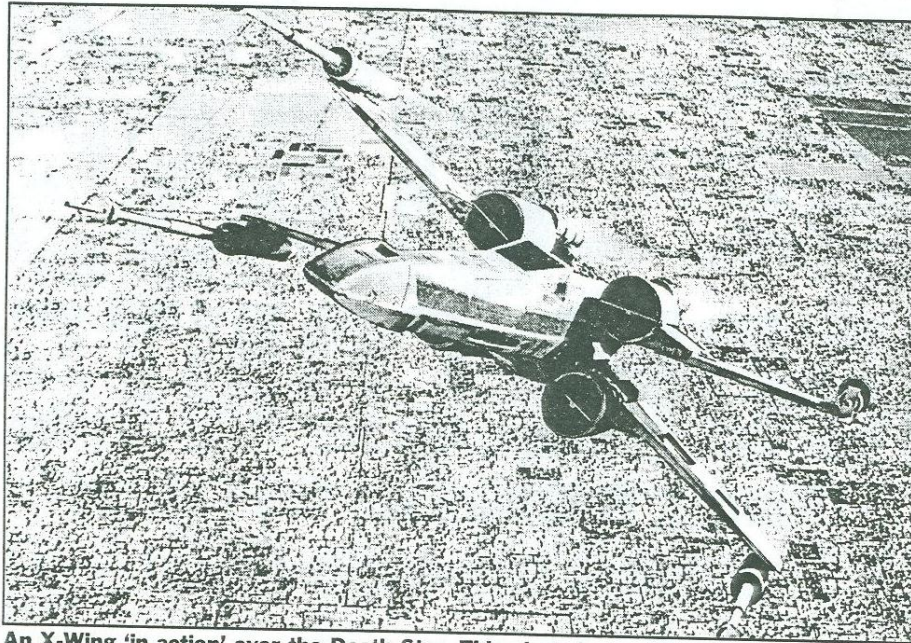
I used the "LEGO brick mold box technique" to cast copies of the J-79 afterburner cans from a Fujimi 1:72 F-4EJ using RTV and Aluminite brand resin. I found that one should measure the resin and catalyst by weight, not volume in order to achieve good results. Also, my first batch of Aluminite was old and my catalyst had gone bad. Be sure your materials are in good shape!

I sanded the raised panel lines down, then rescribed them using an old dental pick and a metal straightedge. This was followed by another light sanding.

The X-Wing was finished using *Testors Model Master Light Gray* (FS 34695) for the overall main exterior and interior color; *Floquil Military Colors RLM 78* for the blue-gray area surrounding the cockpit; *Model*

*Master Insignia Red* (FS 31136) for the red identification markings; *Model Master Silver Chrome Trim* for the R2-D2 unit; and *Tamiya Acrylic Clear Blue, X-23*, for the blue panels on R2-D2.

I knew that the red markings were going to need to be weathered severely to duplicate the look of the prototype, so I attempted to paint them onto the model instead of using the decals provided. I made a photocopy of the decal sheet, then used frisket film to make a painting mask for the wing markings. However, when I sprayed the red paint, I discovered that the frisket film was "low-adhesion" and allowed the paint to leak under the edges. It was necessary to go back and touch up these areas with more of



An X-Wing 'in action' over the Death Star. This photo is a composite of photos of two models.

the light gray paint. This could possibly have been avoided if I'd sprayed some dullcoat over the mask to seal it before spraying the red paint.

The actual shooting models are heavily weathered. I at first experimented with a technique I read about in a magazine consisting of "spray gloss clear over enamels, then weather using a wash of gloss enamel wiped off using a cloth dipped in thinner." I was not able to get good results with this technique. Al at D&J Hobby suggested using an acrylic craft

paint called *Ceramcoat Softints Transparent Blending Colors* (black) over the enamels. I found that this acrylic paint, applied using as a wash using a damp brush, gave good controllable results. Excess wash was wiped off using rubbing alcohol. The red identification markings were weathered by lightly rubbing sanding sticks over the fuselage in the same direction as the "air-flow" in order to distress the red paint and tone it down.

A simple stand was fabricated using a rod and base made of acrylic.

While there are many more expensive X-Wing models available, the old MPC kit can be built into a nice replica of the "real thing" with a bit of work, styrene and enthusiasm.

### X-Wing References

Cotta Vaz, Mark, and Hata, Shinji: *From Star Wars to Indiana Jones: The Best of the Lucasfilm Archives*, Chronicle Books, 1994

*Famous Spaceships of Fact and Fantasy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Kalmbach Publishing, 1996

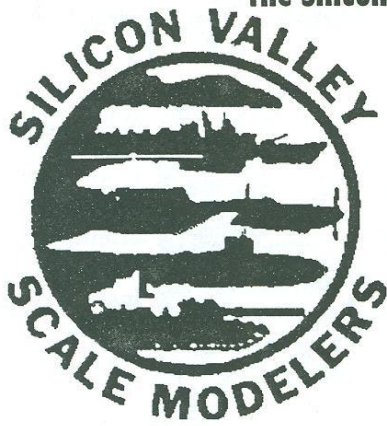
Johnson, Shane: *Star Wars Technical Journal of the Rebel Forces Volume #3*, Starlog Magazines, 1994

*International Modeler* magazine, Nov-Dec. 1978; article: Star Wars X-Wing Fighter, model by Bruce MacRae

Schweiger, Peter, and Smith, Bill: *Star Wars Sourcebook*, West End Games, 1994

Titelman, Carol: *The Art of Star Wars: Episode IV: A New Hope*, Ballantine Books, 1979/ October 1994





The Silicon Valley Scale Modelers present their sixth annual

# KICKOFF CLASSIC MODEL CONTEST

Sunday, February 28, 1999 at the  
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**This year's theme: Gone But Not Forgotten**

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**Arlie Charter Memorial (Best U.S. Army Air Force Pacific Theatre Aircraft)**

**Aayrton Senna Memorial (Best Competition Car) • Best Air Racer**

**Best Ed Heinemann Design Aircraft**

**Best Vietnam Armor Subject (1945-1975)**

**Mike Williams Memorial (Best Sci-fi/Fantasy/Real Space Subject)**

**Best Of Show Senior (Ted Kauffman Memorial)**

**Best Of Show Junior (Bill Magnie Memorial)**

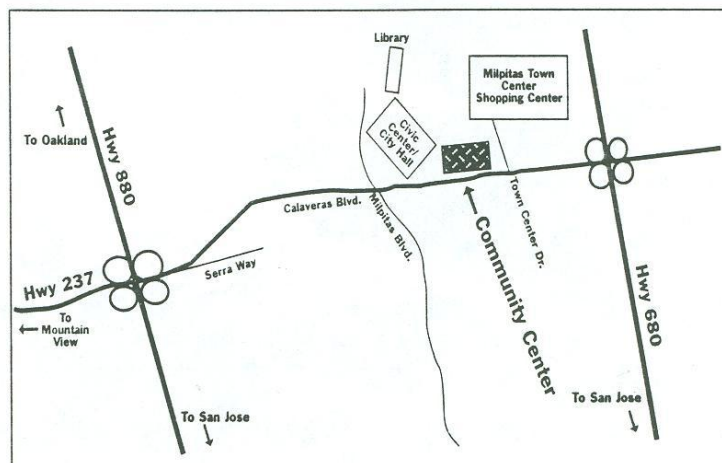
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## Categories

### Senior (18+ years)

- S1. Single Engine Jet or Rocket Aircraft, 1:72
- S2. Multi Engine Jet Aircraft, 1:72
- S3. Single Engine Prop or Turbo-prop Aircraft, 1:72
- S4. Multi-Engine Prop or Turbo-prop Aircraft, 1:72
- S5. Single Engine Jet or Rocket Aircraft, 1:48
- S7. Multi Engine Jet Aircraft, 1:48
- S8. Single Engine Prop or Turbo-prop Aircraft, Allied, 1:48
- S8. Single Engine Prop or Turbo-prop Aircraft, Axis, 1:48
- S9. Multi-Engine Prop or Turbo-prop Aircraft, 1:48
- S11. Jet and Rocket Aircraft 1:32
- S12. Prop Aircraft, 1:32
- S13. Biplanes, all scales
- S14. Rotary Wing Aircraft, all scales
- S15. Civil, Sport and Racing Aircraft, all scales
- S16. Missiles, all scales
- S17. Jet, Prop and Rocket Aircraft, 1:144
- S18. Military Vehicles, Soft Skin.. 1:35 or larger
- S19. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Closed Top, 1:35 or larger
- S20. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Open Top, 1:35 or larger
- S21. Self-propelled Guns, 1:35 or larger
- S22. Towed Artillery and Ancillary Vehicles, 1:35 or larger
- S23. Military Vehicles, All Types, 1:48 and smaller
- S24. Ships, 1:350 and larger
- S25. Ships, 1:351 and smaller
- S26. Automobiles, stock, all scales
- S27. Automobiles, Custom, all scales
- S28. Automobiles, Competition, Open Wheel, all scales
- S29. Automobiles, Competition, Closed Wheel, all scales
- S30. Space Vehicles, Fictional, All Scales & Types
- S31. Space Vehicles, Real, All Scales & Types
- S32. Figures, Historical, all scales
- S33. Figures, Fantasy and Fiction, all scales
- S34. Prehistoric Subjects, all types and scales

- S35. Out of the Box, all types and scales
- S36. Dioramas, all types and scales
- S37. Hypothetical Vehicles, all types and scales
- S38. Miscellaneous, all types and scales
- S39. Collections, all types and scales

### Junior (13-17 years)

- J1. Aircraft
- J2. Military Vehicles
- J3. Automobiles
- J4. Dinosaurs and Figures
- J5. Ships

### Sub-Junior (12 and under)

- Y1. Aircraft
- Y2. Military Vehicles and Ships
- Y3. Automobiles
- Y4. Figures

### Special Awards:

- H1. Ted Kauffman Memorial Award for Judges' Best of Show, Senior
- H2. Bill Magnie Memorial Award for Judges' Best of Show, Junior
- H3. Arlie Charter Memorial Award for Best U.S. Army Air Corps, Pacific Theater Subject
- H4. Ayrton Senna Memorial Award for Best Competition Automobile
- H5. Best Ed Heinemann-Designed Aircraft
- H6. Best Vietnam Armor Subject (1945-1975)
- H7. Mike Williams Memorial Award for Best Science Fiction, Fantasy or Real Space Subject
- H8. George S. Patton Award for Best U.S. Armor Subject, ETO
- H9. Tim Curtis Award for Service To SVSM

### Schedule of Events

- 9 a.m.-noon—Registration
- 11:45—Judges' meeting
- 12:30-2 p.m.—Judging
- 3 p.m.—Awards Presentation

### Fees

- Seniors: \$4 registration, \$1 per model entered
- Juniors: \$1 registration, .50 per model entered
- Vendors: \$30 per table

### General Rules

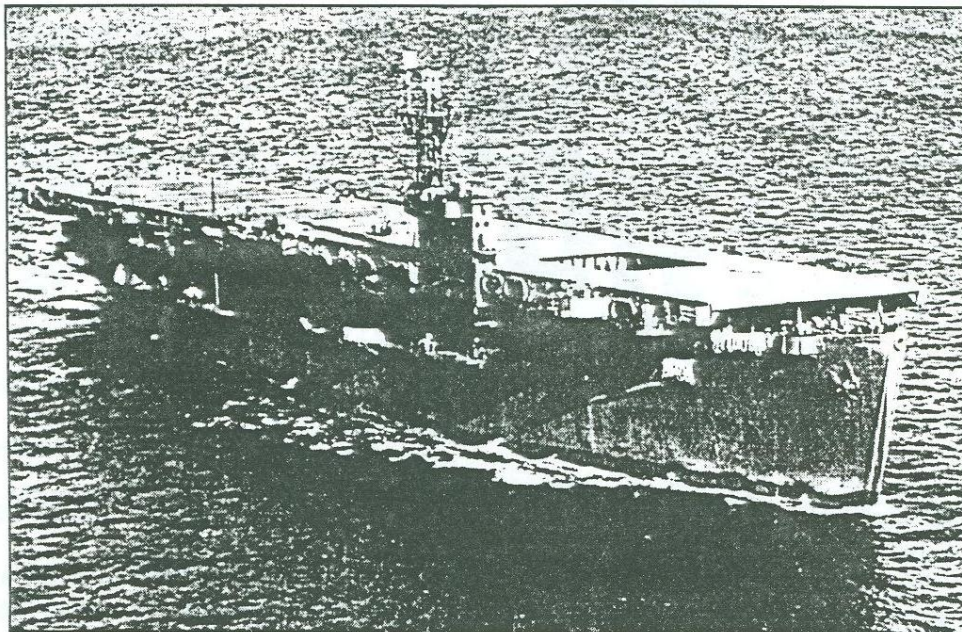
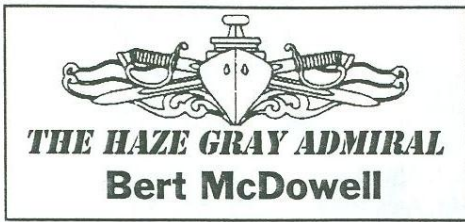
1. IPMS/USA rules and criteria will be used for this contest. No model may be handled by the judges. Model placement will be handled by the builder. SVSM invites members of other chapters in our region to participate by joining our judging teams.
2. The Contest Director will make the final ruling on all disputes during the contest and may split or combine categories based on the nature and number of entries.
3. No model that has won an award at an IPMS National Convention or at any Region IX contest prior to Feb.22, 1998 may be entered in this contest, but past winners are invited to place their work on display.
4. Out of the Box category (S35) is per IPMS/USA rules. Box art and instructions are not mandatory for this contest..SVSM appreciates the honor system, and would also appreciate these supporting materials if available to the contestant.
5. SVSM asks that all contestants keep away from judging teams during the course of the contest to ensure impartiality. Interference with judging teams by the contestants will be handled per IPMS/USA rules and could render the contestant's models ineligible for award consideration.
6. All model entries will be handled per IPMS/USA rules, and all work must be done by the entrant.



# Deck, refit details help build a better *Bogue*

At the beginning of World War II, the rush to put large quantities of aircraft carriers to sea included a huge number of "baby flat-tops." There was a need to resupply the forward areas with aircraft, both Army and Navy, and the high command devised a method of delivery using small carriers. The Army's P-40s and P-47, as well as the Navy's planes, would crowd the decks of the escort carriers (CVEs) with just enough room to launch the first plane on the catapult. When the last aircraft was launched, the ship turned back for the U.S. to pick up more. This rather mundane duty was one of the ships' original purposes. However, during the design phase, the Royal Navy began using their small carriers for convoy protection, fighting U-Boats and Fw 200 Condors. The CVEs went on the offensive.

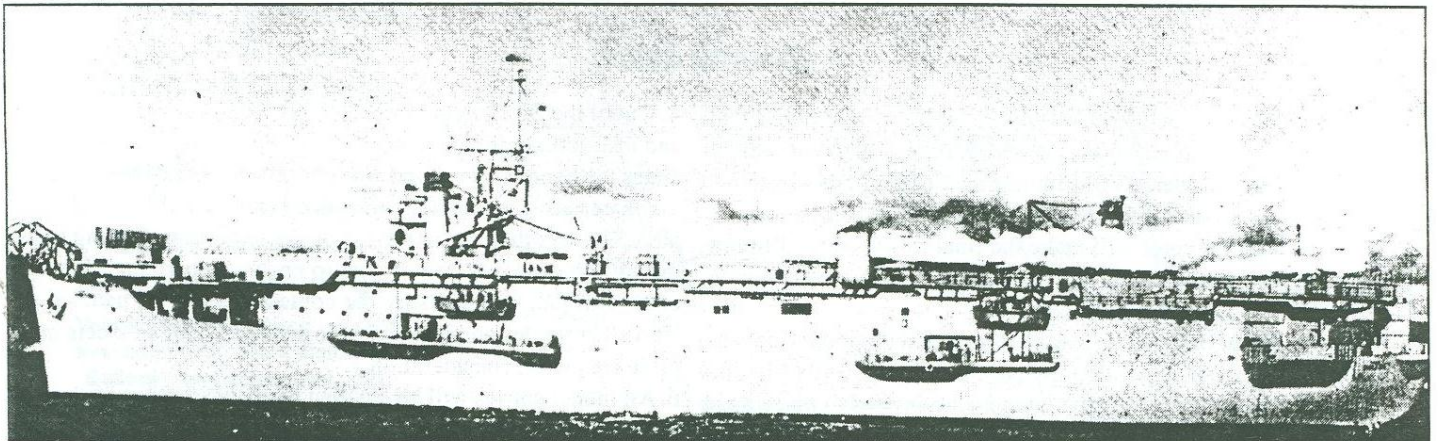
The hulls used for the conversions to carriers were the new cargo ship hulls, known as the C-3 type. Used for tenders, transports or attack cargo ships, these C-3 hulls were in abundance in shipyards and all over the United States. Expediency was the rule, and since the C-3s could be converted quickly, many were taken over by the Navy for the new carrier program. After a few experiments, the final design evolved into the *Bogue* class CVEs: ships with the capability to offer about 30 aircraft or deliver more than twice that to the battle



**The U.S.S. *Bogue* underway in Puget sound on Nov. 3, 1942, six weeks after her commissioning, showing the ship's original configuration.**

ships. For a time, the kits were off the market, but then they arrived in a new box. Evidently, *Tamiya* leased the *Pit Road* molds and is now marketing the *Bogue* in a somewhat improved form. The major parts (hull, flight deck, superstructure) are still the same, but the armament trees sport smaller 20mm and 40mm guns and better detailed aircraft (F6Fs, F4Us, TBFs & SB2Cs). Also, *Tamiya* leaves both bridges styles on the tree to choose from. It's an improved kit, but there is some work a modeler could consider before starting the model, particularly if superdetailing is planned.

Since both kits are in the stores, I'll use the *Tamiya* part



**The *Bogue*-class ships served long after World War II as aircraft transports. The shrouded white objects at the stern of the U.S.S. *Breton* in this photo are F-104 *Starfighters*!**



numbers, some of which are the same or similar to the *Pit Road* kit. The hull assembly begins with the bow and stern deck plates (A3, A20 and A21) and the base plate (A6). These, when assembled, will leave manageable seams to fill. I have a problem with the molded-on detailing (piping, vertical ladders and paravanes) on the hangar deck walls. I carefully removed these details with a curved X-Acto blade, being careful not to remove the nearby window and door frames. The piping can be replaced with plastic or brass rod and the ladders replaced with photoetched brass. The paravanes are in the *Pit Road* equipment set #E-9.

Before adding the hangar deck walls (B33 to B35) think about whether you want to open the doors to the hangar deck. Cut out one or two doors with the idea of also lowering one or two of the elevators and detailing the hangar. Don't worry about the curved sheer of the deck—it's an accurate representation. (Imagine the poor deck crew pushing aircraft "uphill" in heavy seas!) Also note the heavy-handed "grating" on the hull sponson decks. It should be toned down a bit, if not removed altogether. The 20mm locating points can go, too, since the location of the 20mm guns varied from ship to ship. The late version of the *Bogue* I'm doing had no sponson 20mm guns because of the added weight of the extra 40mm guns.

Next comes the flight deck, and no doubt this is where many of us will part company. The flight deck has some peculiar detailing; there are scored lines athwartship at about the same location as the tie down strips in my drawings. If anything, these lines should be raised minutely with finely-scribed lines representing planking in between. I chose to sand down the deck and add an overlay of *Evergreen Scale Models* #2020 scribed styrene sheet to represent planking. After running a photocopy of the deck top, I cut the print out for a template and marked the outline on the scribed sheet. The #2020 sheet is too small to get the whole deck in one piece; remember that on U.S. ships, the planking runs from side to side. There is an expansion joint just aft of the bridge, which I used to hide the seam between the two pieces and that's where the two halves join (see overhead drawing). Cut the deck overlay a bit larger than the kit deck (which I'll now call the flight deck base) and sand it down carefully to get as perfect a match as possible. Next locate the two elevators and catapult and cut them out. Save the two elevators; you can sand them down later to fit. The opening should be lined with .010 by .020 plastic strip to represent the framing, which will make the opening smaller. Add plastic strip in the catapult slot as well. Doing all this before gluing the sheet styrene overlay to the deck base will help keep the deck detail even and level.

Next, I drill a series of 1/16" holes in the deck base from the underside, keeping the holes within the hull line to hide them (Figure 1). Clean off the drilling flash. Lay the deck overlay on a length of 1" by 2" pine—make sure it's straight—with the deck base on top of the overlay, top down (Fig-

ure 2). Hold them both in place with rubber bands and line them up perfectly. Apply a drop of very thin superglue in each hole. Capillary action will cement the sheet styrene and kit deck "sandwich," but leave the parts rubber banded overnight to prevent warping. To complete the flight deck, I cut some .020 plastic strips for the ramps (the turndowns at the end of the deck) and rolled them smooth until they match the curve of the flight deck base. After gluing them on, I sanded them smooth. The deck now looks a bit more representative of a planked deck than it did before.

Before going on to the gun tubs and catwalks along the flight deck, I did one final operation on the deck. After spraying a variety of wood colors on the deck, I made up a template of the deck ironwork (tie-down strips, catapult and elevator surrounds). I used an 8 1/2 by 11 sheet of label paper in a photocopier and ran three images of the flight deck. An old drawing board and T-square was used to cut the template to represent the tie-down strips. Placing the template on the deck, I sprayed it with a dark gray; a number of coats were used to build up a slight bit of relief. I did the same with a second template for the elevator and the catapult ironwork.

Next came the flight deck "stain," represented by a fairly dark blue (*Humbrol* HU-3, Intermediate Blue). The first deck colors (wood and steel) were *Floquil* paints, because they will hold up under the stress of the weathering I do. After the deck blue, I add the deck markings in white, and after a suitable

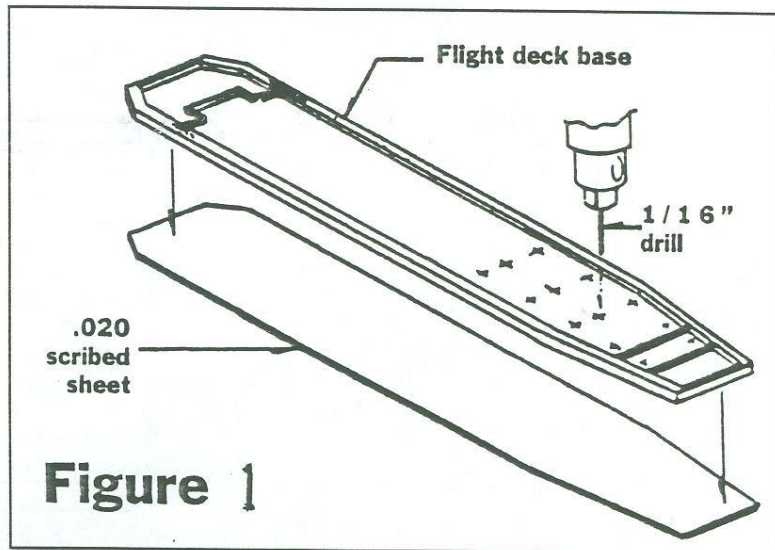


Figure 1

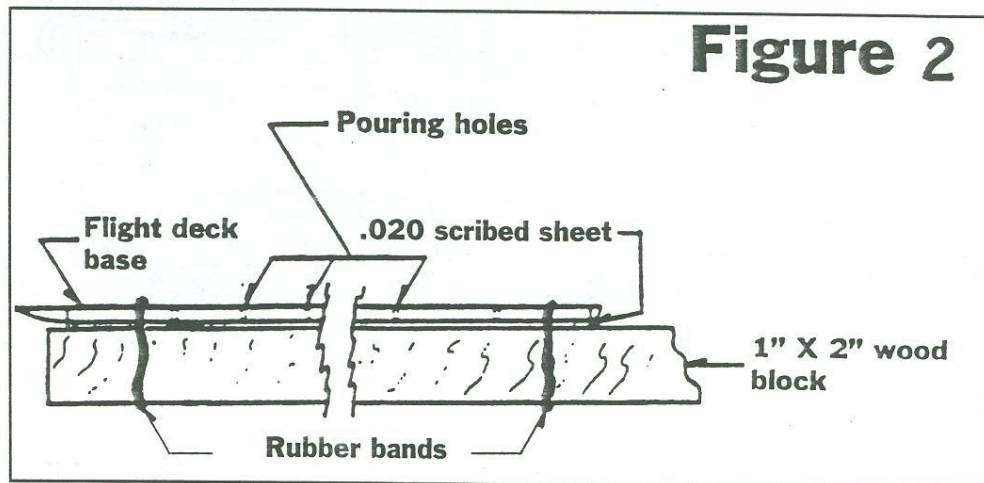
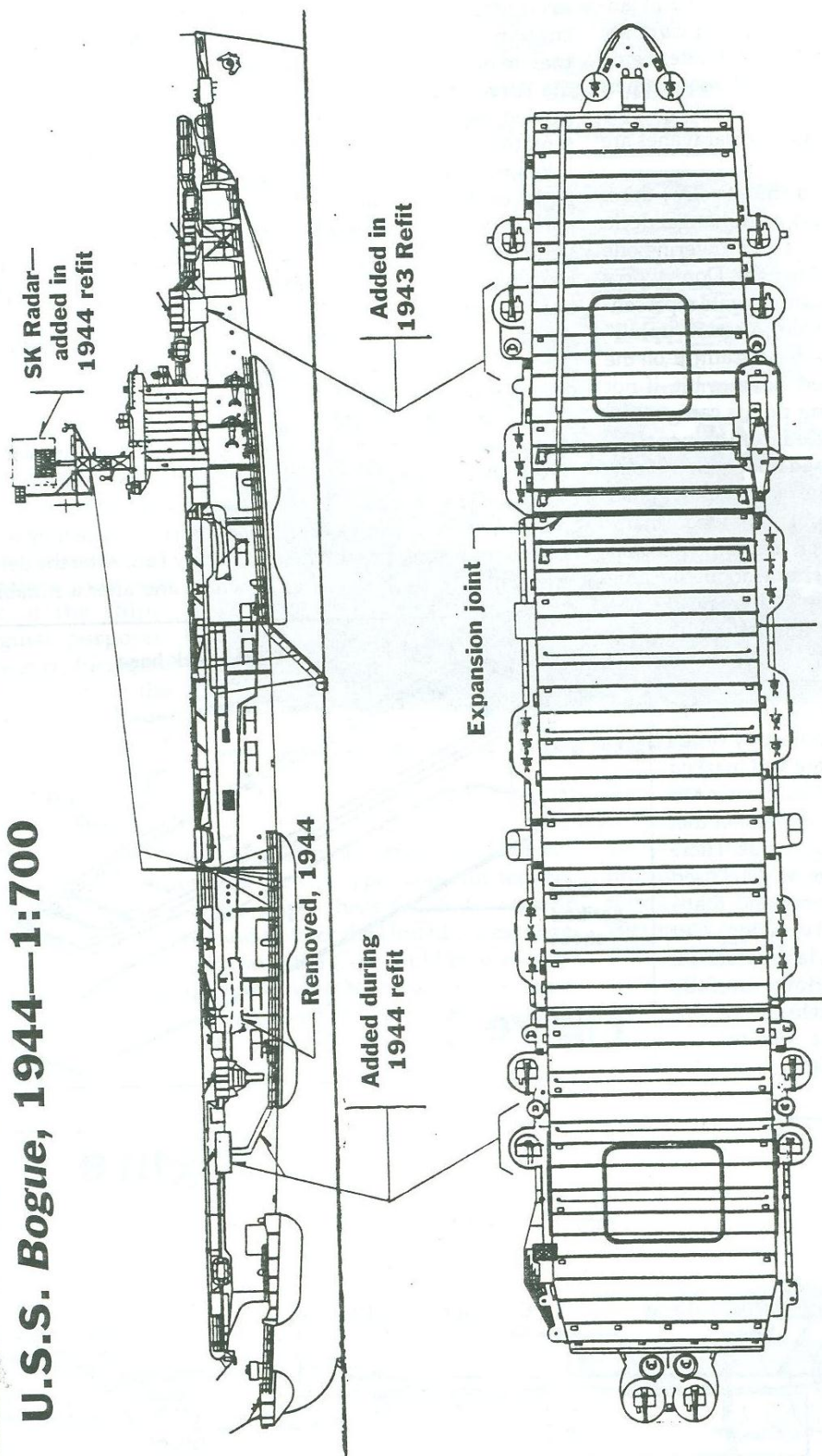


Figure 2



# U.S.S. Bogue, 1944—1:700



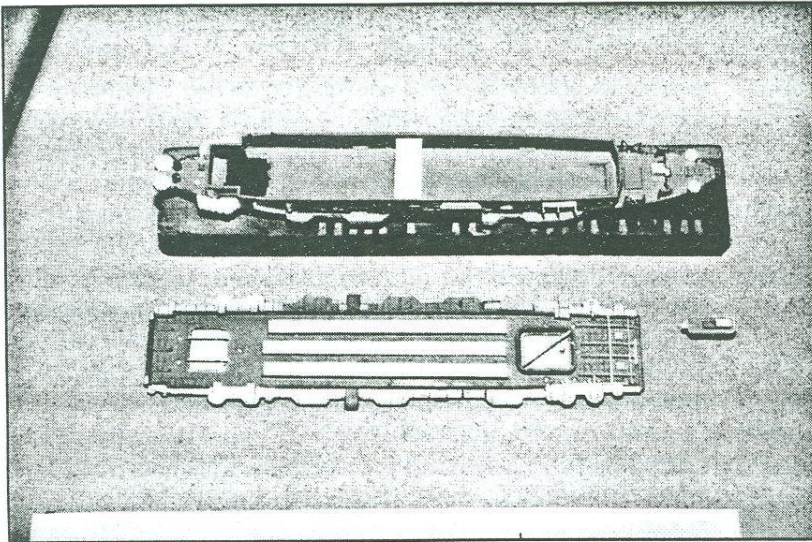
drying time, I begin weathering. This consists of rubbing the deck down in the direction of the planks with a white, nylon eraser until a little bit of the wood and steel show through. I rub off more at the high-traffic locations, but I keep an eye on a touch of subtlety, because overdoing the weathering is easy to do. Once the weathering is done to the modeler's satisfaction, he can go on to the rest of the deck construction and detailing without disturbing it with templates or masking tape.

I followed the kit instructions for the deck walkways with the exception of piece B40, which hangs under the aft section of the deck. This strip represents a hanging walkway similar to those hanging below the flight decks on *Essex*-class carriers. I chose to steal a brass catwalk from *Tom's Modelworks'* set #700 for fleet carriers and substitute it for the kit part. The two parts intended for under the front ramp (B37) should be discarded. I couldn't find these in any photos of the *Bogue* or her sisters.

By this time, your 1:700-scale eye should be tuned to the walls of the gun tubs; these are all too thick. My choice is to replace the entire tub in these cases; another option would be to sand the part down to the base and replace the wall with .0101 by .060 or .080 plastic strip. In the case of the *Bogue* (and a few others of the class), the 5-inch tubs at the stern have a wavy top edge ending higher than the kit parts (B28 and B29). New walls should be added here also. One last thought about the tub walls: if the .010 plastic is too thick for your tastes, even after sanding, you can always cut small strips of .003 brass from your photo-etch set and use those. Now, THAT's nit-picking!

The instructions list the assembly of the superstructure as the first order of business. I moved this to the second to last operation, just before the final painting of the hull, because of the





The three main components of Bert's *Bogue*—the hull, flight deck and superstructure. Note all the work done to improve the catwalks and gun tubs.

delicacy of the superdetailing in this area. If there is any one are of this kit that just screams out for brass detail parts, it's the superstructure. The lattice mast, radar platform and SK antenna and YE homing beacon from *Tom's Modelworks CVE set (#707)* replaced kit parts B1, B2 and B3. In the assembly of the basic structure, I chose part B19 as the outside panel. This represents the bracing that was added by 1944 to reinforce the island. Also, of the two searchlight platforms (A10 and C5), only the front one should be installed. Part B15, the bridge, has a two level wall, which I cut off and replaced with a .010 by .080 strip all around, letting about .010 hang below the deck as on the prototype. The rest went according to the kit instructions, except that part B11, the yardarm, was replaced with .015 brass rod. To support the island, I replace parts A17, A18 and A19 with three lengths of .022 brass rod. By the way, that lip at the base of the inside panel of the island is used to hook in to the flight deck. Since I raised the deck by .020, I shaved the top of the lip to locate the island at the same relative level as the deck.

By now, if I haven't discouraged you from trying this project, then I must recommend a good, low-cost reference book, *Escort Carriers In Action*, published by Squadron/Signal. It contains 22 photos of the *Bogue*-class ships, which should be more than enough for superdetailing ideas. Using other books on the subject, I was able to determine that the *Bogue* received three refits during WWII. Photos of her as first launched show the original design with a semi-narrow bridge (part B14) and six 40mm paired gun tubs, two on the stern and one on each corner of the flight deck. The *In Action* book's first photo of the *Bogue* shows her first refit, which gave her another 40mm tubs, one each behind the forward two. This is the version that appears in the kit. The same book shows her second refit with a new paint job (Measure 32, Design 4A) and another pair of 40mm twins added behind the flight deck's aft 40's. The total of 10 40mm

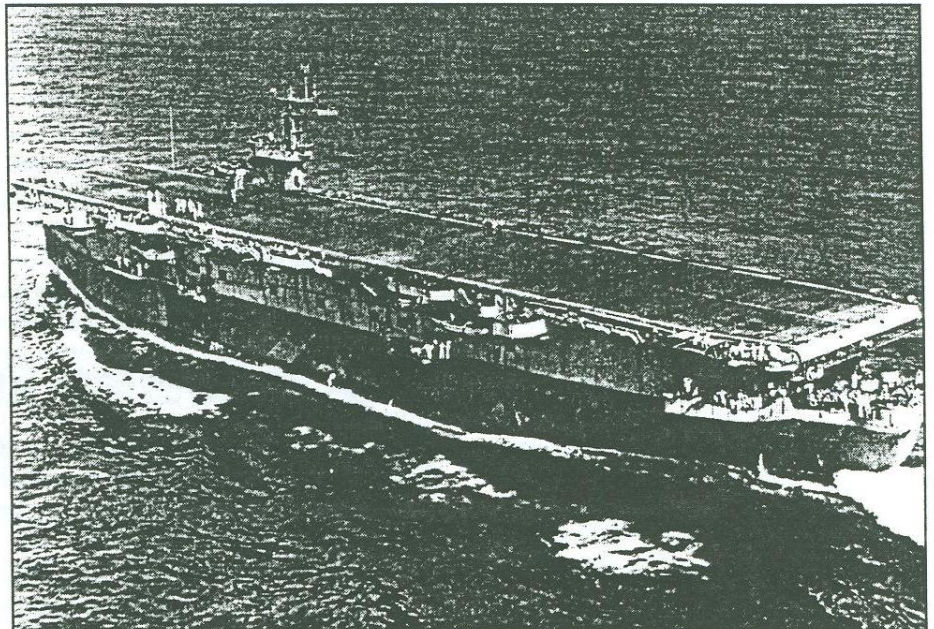
mounts brought the weight of the armament so high that something had to be removed, so all of the sponson 20mm guns and two of the four 26-foot boats had to go. The kit only comes with two boats, so if you have the 1943 version in mind you will have to scrounge up two more boats. This refit also removed the small SC radar and replaced it with the 17-foot SK radar. The second refit is the version that I chose to do, even though it meant more work.

The most noticeable change with the second refit (other than the paint scheme) was the addition of the last two 40mm gun tubs on the flight deck gallery. Instead of modifying parts B26 and B27, I scratchbuilt two new platforms (.020 bases with .010 gunwales). Check the plan view on the drawing; the last two were shaped differently than the original tubs, being rounded with no bracing.

The final refit made a small change to the radar platform atop the lattice mast but retained the SK radar. The design 4A camouflage pattern was simplified, using only 5L light gray and 5N navy blue. One source has mentioned that the *Bogue* (along with the *Card* and the *Core*) had two catapults, but I've found no photographic evidence to verify this. If there were a second catapult installed, it would have been added during the third refit. Without a photo of the forward deck area for this time period, I decided to stick with modeling the *Bogue* after her second refit.

After you've made the appropriate changes for your refit, you'll have three separate assemblies: the hull, flight deck and island structure. Because of the complexity of the camouflage pattern, they should all be painted separately before assembly. The same goes for the gun mounts and other little details.

In part two of this story, we'll look at painting the Measure



The *Bogue* underway in the Atlantic on June 20, 1943 following her first re-fit. The two-tone paint scheme is Measure 22 camouflage.

32/Design 4A scheme and take a look at just how close the yard workers came to matching the diagrams. Wish me luck!



# NOVEMBER MINUTES

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Our November meeting featured a great number of donations to our annual Veterans Hospital Model Drive, and was interrupted periodically by spurts of auctioning that brought in more than \$235 to be used to buy snap-together kits and supplies for the servicemen and women in the VA Hospital. There's no reason to quit giving now—bring any and all kits you can spare to our December meeting, or drop them in the bins at your local hobby shop, to continue this great SVSM tradition.

In model talk... Dave Balderrama decided to have fun ("for once!") and took our "Vietnam 1980" contest with a navalized A-10, pictured on the catapult preparing for a carrier launch! The 1:144 A-10 came from a DML kit, with a tailhook, catapult shuttle bar and refuelling pass made from sprue and decals stolen from, among other places, a Bf 109! Dave jolted himself out of this relative normalcy by starting a *Special Hobbies* AS 6V-1 in 1:72; the fit on this model is poor, he says. A friend of Frank Babbitt's known only a Scott displayed a lovely 1:16 *Revell* dragster, finished off in attractive FedEx colors. Peter Olesko backdated an old AMT Ju 52 to portray a Spanish Civil War bomber, and used his considerable skills to bring a *Hasegawa* 1:72 Fw 190A to life. Bert McDowell showed the new *Skywave* Liberty Ship kit, which has him and Tom Harrison so impressed that the *Tom's Modelworks* Liberty Ship is going back into production! Bert's also working on a *Sumner/Gearing* destroyer, as he outlined in his article in last month's Styrene Sheet, and a *Bogue*-class escort carrier as he discussed in this issue. Cliff Kranz went ballistic, posing his *Condor* 1:72 V-2 flying bomb next to a 1:35 Scud missile and a 1:35 V-2, both built from DML kits. Joe Fleming took brush in hand and took on a few figures from *Tamiya's* U.S. Infantry Assault set, which will end up in a diorama sometime soon, and has his second 1:35 Tiger almost ready for a final coat of Afrika Brown. Joe doesn't limit himself to one scale; he put a lot of extra effort into *Coopertiva's* 1:72 Su 100, adding an *Eduard* brass set, dealing with thick, nasty tracks and putting the final product on a nice base of distressed marble. A *Tamiya* halftrack formed the basis of Eric McClure's M3 75mm Mortar Gun Carriage; Eric added a *Kendall Model Company* conversion and *Tank Workshop* drive sprockets and tracks to give the half-track better footing. Ben Pada says he builds his models out of the box, but that's a real understatement, as the weathering on his 1:48 *Hasegawa* Macchi 202 shows. Ben's magic touch was also applied to his F-86F finished in John Glenn's "MiG Mad Marine" colors, and Ben has a *Tamiya* F-84 and *Accurate Miniatures* Yak-1B ready for painting. Laramie Wright's first attempt at using superglue on an armor piece came on his *Tamiya* Cromwell IV; he says the kit has a great fit, and it may be finished as a Korean War tank. A little more patience was required for Laramie's CMK Skoda T.38t, which needed care in alignment. Laramie says he lost his mind and just had to put an interior in *Tamiya's* Sd.Kfz 223 armored car, and further evidence of insanity may be his continued efforts on *Pavla's* 1:72 Niemann R-10 light bomber. Mike Burton used the *Falcon* conversion to turn his *Hasegawa* A-10 into the two-seat NAWGS experimental version; he salvaged the rear cockpit from an A-10 that was a victim of the 1989 earthquake. Mark Hernandez added a host of interior improvements to his 1:72 Arado E.555 Amerikabomber, including a throttle quadrant with SIX

throttle levers. Mark's also working on an *A & B Resins* kit of the P.1104 parasite fighter that he says has a rough fit, including horizontal stabilizers that aren't parallel to each other! Braulio Escoto built a *Hobbycraft* 1:72 F2H *Banshee* as a memento of past times, modeling a plane that was on display at the Moffett Field Air Show in the early 1960s. Bruce McBride is doing his thing on an old *Aurora* Mammoth kit, which first saw the light of day in 1972. Jim Lund's air fleet consisted of airliners that went military and vice versa, starting with a DH. 86 *Express* from *Transport Wings*, a *Supermodel* Cant.506b turned into a bomber using the *Broplan* conversion, and a Potez 540 converted into the Potez 62 airliner using the *Heller* kit. It took Roy Sutherland six months to finish his *Hasegawa* *Spitfire* IX "out of the box," a misnomer since he used a *Cooper Details* seat and a *Hawkeye* spinner and propeller. He compared it to a 1:72 *Spitfire* V he did several years ago. Roy also had a *Spitfire* V in 1:48 scale ready for paint, and the masters for the *Jaguar* 1:48 *Typhoon* set he's working on. He also had a real anomaly (for Roy), a Panzer II by Alan, the first armor piece he's built in many years. Steve Travis' "Green Hornet" number four is a speed machine, placing the body and grille on a Fiat double dragster body. Steve built a working linkage on this model, but he says never again! Ron Wergin continues to show just how good a hand-painted finish can look; this month, he displayed an armored platoon in 1:72, including a *Fujimi* KV-1, a *Hasegawa* Grant tank, a *Revell* Sherman, an *Airfix* JS-1 and an *Fujimi* Type I. Ron also showed a 1:48 *Hellcat*, a *Hawk Bearcat*, and a *Monogram* F-80 *Shooting Star*. Ron, never one to be limited, also did a great job on the *Monogram* 1:32 Stug IV, the *Hasegawa* Panther II and the *Tamiya* M48 in 1:35, and some lovely figures including a *Monogram* paratrooper. Mike Braun brought out his beautiful DML Ju 88 in mid-war brown and green camouflage; Mike really likes this kit, which is as versatile as its real-life counterpart. Ken Miller is building the *Aurora* 1:72 DC-9-70 in the Hughes Air West "Flying Banana" scheme, and he's converting a 1:72 A-10 into a firebomber, a modification that has been suggested several times over the past few years. Chris Bucholtz finally finished his *Condor* A-36 *Apache*, using parts from the *Italeri* P-51A, the *Eduard* brass sheet, the *Hawkeye* P-51B interior and spare parts from a *Hasegawa* P-51B. His model depicts the plane flown by Maj. John Crowder in North Africa in 1943. Jim Priete has turned treadhead; he's installing an aftermarket T-34 turret on the *Esci* hull and working on a T-54 and a *Dragon* M50 Sherman. He's also done some work on the ducting and intakes of an IMC Chapparral 2E racer. Brad Chun is building the new *Academy* Fw 190D-9, using a *Cooper Details* seat and gunsight to improve the interior; Brad's also making his own aftermarket parts, building the radar nose on his Marine Corps PBJ-1J *Mitchell* from scratch. Mike Meek's Rotofinish *Mustang* is nearing race-readiness; all Mike has left to do is describe the panel lines and paint. And the model of the month goes to... Frank Babbitt's collection of projects, including a Luftwaffe '46 project, an *Airmodel* Ju 287 vacuform kit that Frank's building for the December club contest, a shiny "Golden Hawks" T-33, a resin *Collect-Aire* 1:72 Edo OS2C floatplane, a DML Su-24 that has proven to be quite a sanding experience, and a *Hasegawa* P-3 *Orion* finished in the Iranian blue camouflage scheme. Quantity AND quality!



# The SVSM gift exchange nightmare returns

It's that time of the year again, time for credit card debt, Rankin and Bass "animated" Christmas specials and mass deforestation in the name of interior decorating. Yes, it's time for the Christmas/Hanukkah/Kwanza Holiday Industrial Complex! That also means it's time again for the Silicon Valley Scale Modelers pizza party, gift exchange and theft-fest!

It comes around each year, just like cold and flu season—the third Friday of December, all hell breaks loose in Milpitas. We've done this for several years, but for the benefit of the newcomers, here's as brief an explanation as we can manage:

First comes the pizza. It's on the club for the paid-up members, and \$5 for non-members. That will include drinks and any other goodies that people want to bring. This year, please try to refrain from biting each other or eating any of the paper or plastic utensils, as this only leads to loud gastrointestinal outbursts later in the meeting.

Since we have all this pizza around, DO NOT bring models to the meeting unless they are for the "Really Resin" or "Virtually Vacuform" contests. There simply won't be room for more models, if the past is any indication.

Once the gorging has concluded, it's time for the gift exchange. Each person wishing to be in on this malicious activity needs only to bring a model or modeling-related item, valued at \$10 or higher, wrapped up in the obligatory manner of the season. These gifts will be piled high on a table, and as they are, the giver shall give his name to be written on a slip of paper. When the time comes, the first name shall be drawn. This person gets to choose first from the huge pile (which may be a problem, judging by how easily some of our members are distracted by shiny objects) and opens his gift in front of the members, for all to see. Person number two may pick his own gift to be opened before the teeming throng, or may steal person number one's gift. If that gift is stolen, person one goes and gets another present and opens it. The third person may steal either of the two open gifts, or may open a new one. And so on. This continues, as is tradition, until Bert McDowell's

model ship is stolen or until there are no more presents left.

The control placed on this ritual that prevents it from decaying into a grisly free-for-all is that a gift may only be stolen three times. After that, it's out, and the person who stole it last gets to take it home, fondle it, and stick it in the attic or garage with the rest of the stuff he or she will never build. Another sub-rule: Aircraft models by *Lindberg* are NOT welcome. The rule of thumb is this: your gift is not to be an item you would feel bad about taking home with you.

Just speaking hypothetically, let's say that person #1 is Roy Sutherland, and he opens a *Tamiya* 1:350 U.S.S. *Enterprise*. "Oh drat," says Roy. "It's not British!" Person number two (in this example, Bert McDowell) says, "hey, finally! a ship!" and steals Roy's ship. Roy goes and opens another present. It is a *Hasegawa Typhoon*. The third person drawn is Kent McClure. "Hey, that ship's in the same scale as most of my Anime figures!" yells Kent, who takes the ship from Bert. Bert gets confused and thinks Roy's *Typhoon* is a submarine and steals it. Roy opens a new present, this one being a 1:72 *Beaufighter*. Jim Priete is next, and he steals the *Beaufighter*. Roy opens another gift, this one being a *Hasegawa Macchi MC.202*. Lou Orselli is next; he steals the Macchi, Roy steals the *Beaufighter*, Jim steals the *Typhoon*, and Bert steals the *Enterprise*. Since the *Enterprise* has now been stolen three times, it's out and going into permanent storage at Bert's house. Then Kent picks a new gift and the process continues.

The preceding is only hypothetical, because, as you know, Bert never takes a model ship home from these events.

Recently introduced strategies include bringing multiple gifts, sending proxies with your gifts if you are traveling out of town, stealing in-demand kits you DON'T want to set up steals of things you DO want, and keeping track of the steals so that the Secretary (or whoever) gets his gift in a steal-proof fashion.

This traditional event is always the loudest, most raucous and most enjoyable meeting of the year. We look forward to stealing from you!

## The Club Contests keep coming!

*this month, it's..*

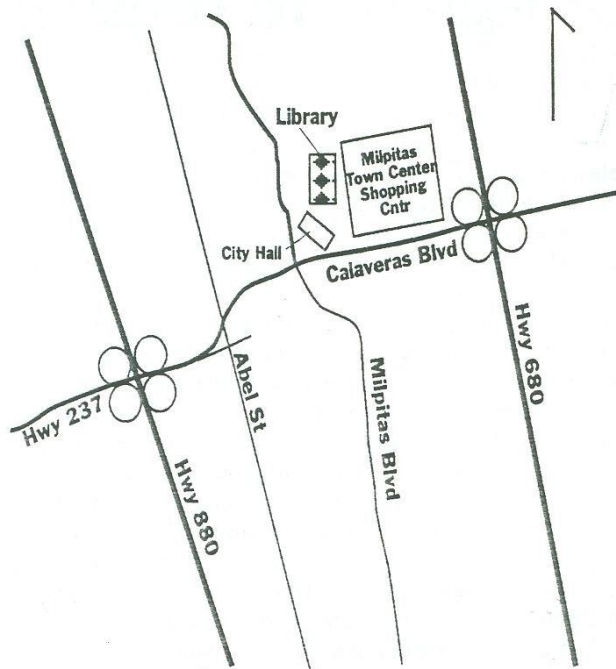
# Virtually Vacuforms (No mixed-media conversions!) and Really Resin (all resin kits)

**January 99: Snakes (planes, cars, you name it—*Kingcobra, Airacobra, Huey Cobra, Plymouth Viper, Don Prudhomme's funny Cars, Ford Cobra & Cobra II, Shelby Cobra, models of fantasy or real snakes!*)**

**February 99: Variable Geometry & VSTOL, LTA**

**March 99: Century Series (F-100 through F-111)**





Next meeting:  
**7:30 p.m.,**  
**Friday,**  
**December 18**  
at the Milpitas  
Public Library  
**40 N. Milpitas Blvd.**  
For more information, call the  
editor at (408) 723-3995  
E-mail: bucholtzc@aol.com



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