

## En-Lightning kit information about the P-38

By Mike Burton  
•Part 6 in a series•

(Editor's note: in this installment, Mike wraps up his discussion of the planes that changed the fighter's role from that of a pure interceptor to a "jack of all trades." This is the second part of his analysis of kits of the P-38, starting with the newest kit, the DML 1:72 kit.)

### 1:72 DML P-38J Lightning (Golden Wings Series)

"Golden Wings," indeed! This little P-38 retails for over \$16! I got one anyway because DML's box art really toasts my bread. Our editor kindly points out the scene depicted is likely made up of whole cloth, as Tommy McGuire in "Pudgy V" is being rolled by a J2M *Raiden* over what appears to be a homeland harbor. I don't know if the ace ever met a *Raiden*, but even revisionist historians will have

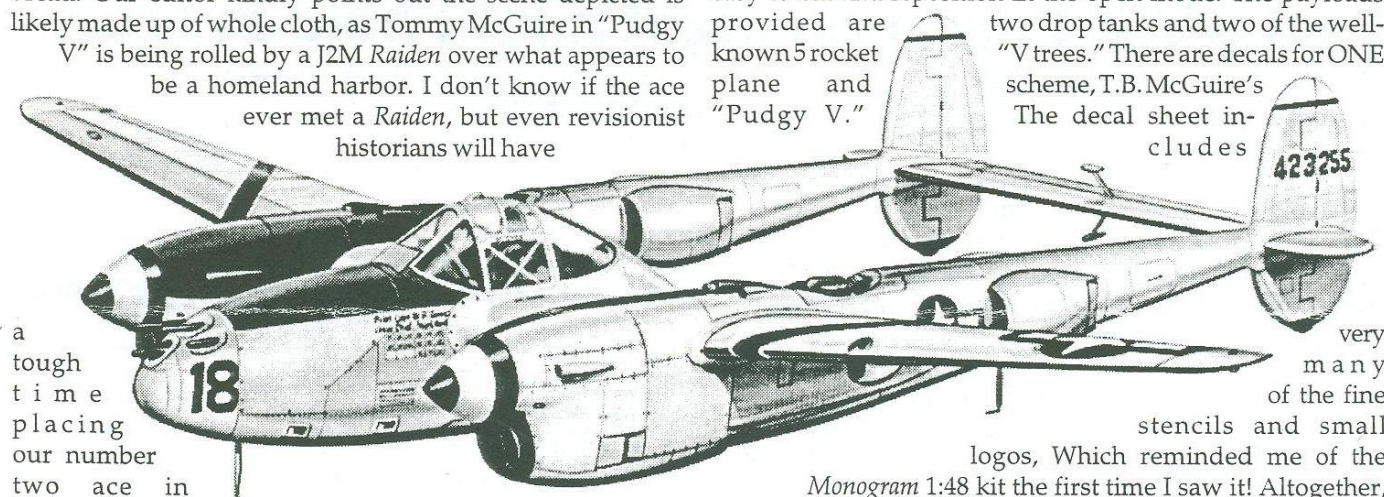
a tough time placing our number two ace in Japan's airspace. Oh well... on to the guts of the kit inside.

It's not a great start when you find a "corrections" slip inside. The kit instructions lacked any detail of the propeller blades which come separate of the hubs, so the addendum shows you how to turn the blades for the left and right booms.

Overall, this is more delicately molded than any other 1:72 P-38 kits I've seen. DML's effort is full of nice little works. The cockpit is a relief molded tub with seat head rest, pedals, and main panel all in single pieces, and the control column is two parts with the "wheel" separate from the stick. The center pod is broken down so the nose is separate, and the gun barrels are loose. The booms have the rudders solid on the outer halves, so if you pose the flight surfaces these are easy to cut away. The cooling scoops have separately-molded fronts, and the main intakes in front are the same way, though an "F" wouldn't use these booms. The gear bays are relief-molded tubs with an extra bit of plumbing supplied loose, and the gear legs are all multi-piece with separate one piece wheel/tires. These have good tread/spoke detail. The gear doors

have detail inside, are thin, and include main actuator arms/hinges. Each wing mold has a top outer piece carrying solid flight surfaces (again, this aids re-positioning of the control surfaces) with a bottom outer inset. The center horizontal stabilizer is a lovely thin single piece, with a similar quality in the stab stubs. Supercharger plumbing, inner pylons, antenna, and stabilizer counterweights are all one-part moldings with high quality.

The propeller assemblies consist of single blades, backplates, and spinner caps. The canopy is well made, but would not be easy to cut and reposition in the open mode. The payloads provided are two drop tanks and two of the well-known 5 rocket "V trees." There are decals for ONE scheme, T.B. McGuire's "Pudgy V." The decal sheet includes



very many of the fine stencils and small logos, which reminded me of the Monogram 1:48 kit the first time I saw it! Altogether, a winning pursuit.

So what's the catch? Two things seem to stay with me... I really like this kit now, but I didn't at first opening. I deliberately did not peek inside before purchase, to get a true reading of "perceived value." My first take: this was a triumph of marketing and sales, a fine new kit spoiled by a too high retail price. The subject matter is popular, as is the scale, but the likelihood of stellar sales for this kit is still iffy because it looks a lot more like \$11.75-\$13.25 material. Of course, mail order cuts down to maybe even below this, but this plane is as much a staple of World War II as the *Mustangs*, T-bolts, Spits and Bf-109s that keep hobby shops selling kits.

The other beef; the surface finish! These beautiful recessed details are great but are ruined by the "eggshell" of the plastic. The out of the box kit is a natural-metal finish, yet to achieve this with current materials will mean having to sand and polish the eggshell to a high degree of smoothness. I don't see how that delicate scribing is going to survive. Okay, sure you

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# ELECTION STUFF

*(Editor's note: March is the month in which we elect new officers. As of this writing, only four candidates had been nominated—Bill Dye for President, Jim Lewis for Vice President, Bill Ferrante for Treasurer and Chris Bucholtz for Secretary/Editor. Here's Bill's statement of candidacy.)*

Although there were no other nominations, I still feel it is fitting to make a statement pertaining to my candidacy for President.

I have enjoyed being a member of the San Jose/Silicon Valley Scale Modelers for several years. The recent change in the meeting format emphasizing model talk and show & tell has been favorably received by all of us. As your new president, I intend on continuing this format to keep the meetings light and enjoyable.

What has impressed me about the Silicon Valley club is the acceptance by everyone of the diverse modeling interests—armor, dinosaurs, airplanes, ships, figures and, yes, egg mod-

els!

Speaking of egg models, I will be promoting one or two wild, wacky (whimsical) club meeting contests that might give us all a break from our other projects and get the smile muscles working even more.

The terrific quality of last years annual contest, produced by Mr. Mike Meek, is exactly what my running mate, Mr. Jim Lewis, has in mind for '96.

I want to be President of Silicon Valley Scale Modelers because I feel an obligation to contribute to the club. My running mates and I will keep you interested in models, modeling and Silicon Valley Scale Modelers. I would appreciate your vote for me and for: Jim Lewis, Vice President; Chris Bucholtz, Secretary and Bill Ferrante, Treasurer.

Bill Dye, Candidate for President,  
Silicon Valley Scale Modelers

## What SVSM election night might hold in store

**By Mike Burton**

(WARNING: this is an opinion piece whose views are solely those of its author, not SVSM)

Yes, it's upon us, a fearsome burden of club contest business that arrives in February and lasts until March every year, it seems. Oh, not our annual model contest. It starts and ends in the same month. The nomination and election of new club officers is the contest I meant. We do have some interested in running (for the door?...oops) for the positions that come open this year.

Our intrepid treasurer, Mr. David Sampson, after much service (he was Editor/Sec. not so long ago) will be rejoining us Loyal Throwers of Rocks & Bombs in the audience after the March election. Our current editor/secretary, Mr. Chris Bucholtz, is out of his mind, and has agreed to remain in office for a THIRD full term. It will be a new record for us at SVSM, and if you wanted to run for this office, well...

Our fine vice-president/contest director, Mr. Mike Meek, will be vacating his office this year. Last but not least, the current president, Mr. Jim Lewis, has term limits pressing him.

At the February meeting we must nominate for the open slots. We face the possibility that unless someone really wants to run, our constitution requires a vote right away to amend it, allowing the President to succeed himself (for this term). Not necessarily a big deal, since any member can propose change to make this permanent, or limit it to a case by case basis or (perish the thought) give it a sundown clause, good for this one time without us having to make a damn constitutional convention out of our meetings hereon.

The club has managed for many years to keep operating with the President as the only term-limited office, but nothing says we can't try something new in the next year and leave it at that. So either someone tosses their hats in the ring or I for one will propose a one-term "Indian Summer" amendment so if the President wants to run again this year we can vote for him.

Beforehand, a motion to limit ALL this business to one minute of discussion from each paid member present (no proxies or sharing) may arrive to insure we don't waste a meeting night, so come prepared to act quickly. There's models on the table!

## Model Clinic and buildfest!

Every first and fourth Friday of the month  
at the Reid Hillview Airport terminal.

Bring your model, some glue and a good attitude!  
Model with some fun company—and learn a thing or two in the  
process

Another fun part of SVSM

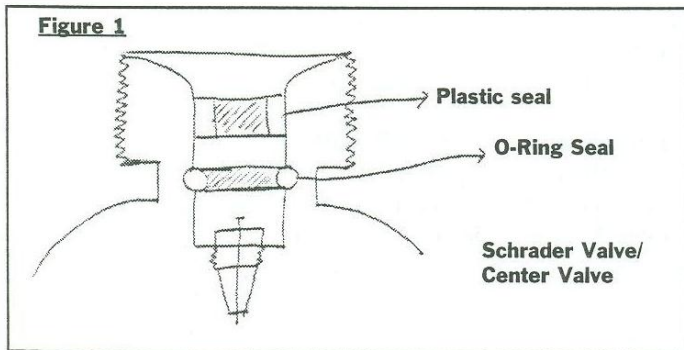


# Using backup tanks for constant air pressure

By Richard Pedro

Do you spend a lot of time fidgeting with the air pressure on your compressor, or adding thinner when you really shouldn't have to? If you answered *yes*, or even paused to think about those questions, this article may be the solution to your air compressor woes.

Those of you that have a hobby-size compressor know what a dream they are. Their small size and somewhat quiet operation makes them perfect for those who have little room to store a full-size compressor. But the small size is their main drawback. These little things can only supply so much air to run our airbrushes. Oh sure, for those little jobs they operate just fine,



but for the larger jobs you begin to notice what many call "sputter." Compressor sputter may botch your paint job with an uneven coat.

How do you get rid of this nuisance? As far as I know, there are two options: become a paint brush god, like Larry Roberts, and hand paint your model, or build a reserve tank for your compressor. The theory here is that by directing the air into tanks like those found on real compressors, you can virtually get rid of the dreaded compressor sputter.

The pressure coming out of the tank will be almost a constant. Just for fun, put your pressure regulator with a pressure gauge on your compressor and while it's running watch the gauge... All over the place right? By the way, how would you know what pressure you're at if the needle bounces around from 20 to 45 psi while the compressor is running?

Before I begin, I have to confess that the idea of adding the tanks to the compressor isn't mine. It's a modification of the original that I saw, so I have to give credit to Chuck Davenport, Director of Publications for the IPMS. The original set up can be seen in the Video Workbench *Model Finishes & Painting Techniques*.

For the videophiles in the club, this series of "how to" videos is an excellent reference source. It covers many different techniques, including battle damage, forced panel lines, weathering, fiber optics, and so on.

This article was also written as I built the first prototype, that way I wouldn't forget anything, when it came time to type everything.

## PARTS LIST:

- 2 propane tanks (essential)
- 1 water trap, pressure regulator & pressure gauge
- 2 wood bases for mounting the setup

- 4 pieces of 1" x 1" pine, wood dowells, or threaded rod for mounting
- Teflon pipe tape or pipe dope
- Bailing wire or nylon ties

## 2 TANK VERSION:

- 1 1/8" brass tee
- 3 1/8" drain valves
- 2 1/4" flare x 1/8" fpt elbow
- 2 1/4" x 2" fpt brass nipple
- 2 1/8" x 2" fpt brass nipple
- 2 1/4" fpt x 3/8" compression fitting
- 1 ft. 3/8" copper refrigerating tubing

## 1 TANK VERSION:

- 1 1/8" x 2" brass nipple
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- 1 1/4" fpt x 3/8" compression fitting
- 1 ft. 3/8" copper refrigeration tubing
- 1 1/8" x close brass nipple

## STEP 1: PREPARATION OF TANKS

**ITEMS NEEDED:** empty propane cans, needle nose pliers, stiff wire, Dremel tool with fiberglass cutter, 5/32 solid brass rod, adjustable pliers.

The main item is the propane tank. If you have one that's not quite empty, you will need to empty it first before starting. Have a barbecue with some of your SVSM buddies.

Before you begin, some words on safety. While removing the valves & cutting always wear safety glasses. Absolutely NO SMOKING while working on the propane tank, just in case there is some fuel left over. Work in an area that has plenty of ventilation, since you don't want the gas (if any) to

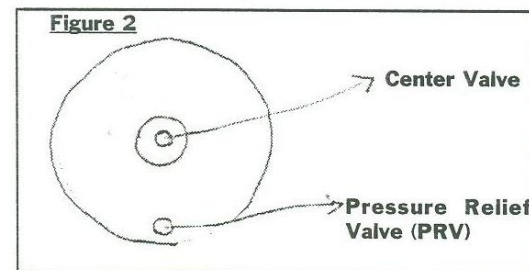
accumulate as this could be a firehazard.

Begin by removing the seals (Figure 1). Use a stiff wire and

pry out the plastic seal, then bend a hook in the wire and lift out the O-ring seal.

Now that your tank (or tanks) is empty, you're ready to begin. At the top of the can there are two valves (Figure 2). Both are similar to the schrader valves found on bicycle tubes and car tires. Remove the Pressure Relief Valve (PRV) first, because it's the easiest to get to. With a small pair of needle nose pliers, grip the PRV and rotate it counter clockwise (Remember: Righty, tighty; lefty, loosey). For safety, point the PRV in a safe direction, away from your body and others, just in case there is some excess pressure that may blow the valve out. Save the PRV.

Next, remove the center valve (CV). Needle nose pliers won't remove it, so you will need to make a tool. Take a 5/32" solid brass rod and cut a notch in it with the Dremel tool



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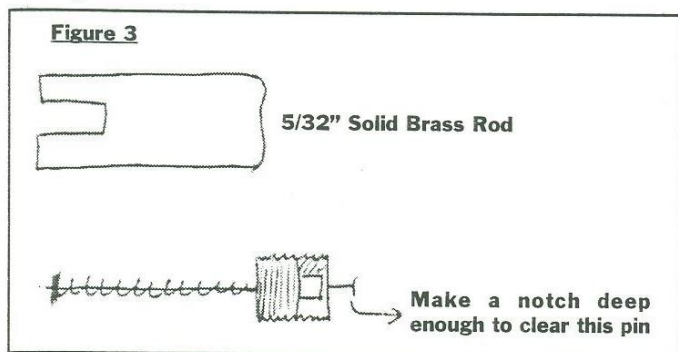
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(Figure 3). Remember the PRV from earlier? Use this as a "master." Periodically check that your notch fit over this valve, and be sure the notch is deep enough to clear the pin in the PRV (Figure 4). Fine-tune your notch with a needle file. Take your time and don't forget to wear safety glasses while cutting.

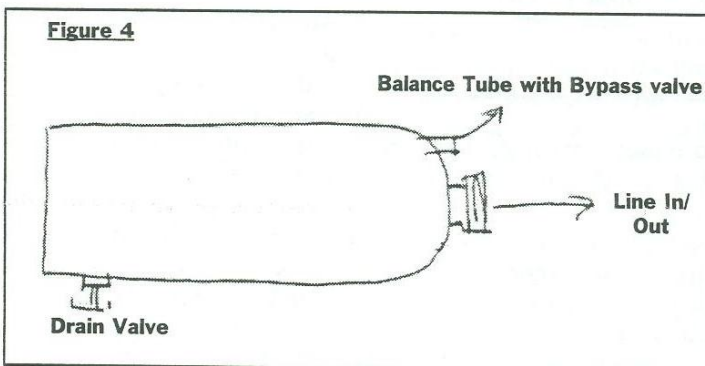


Using the adjustable pliers turn the CV counter-clockwise until the valve falls out.

### STEP 2: SETTING UP

**ITEMS NEEDED:** Drill bits up to the size of the outside diameter of your pipe (about 9/16" and 3/8"), oil to aid in drilling, depressurized canister.

Drill out the two holes on the top of the canister. Work your way up gradually to the outside diameter of the pipe that you will be using. Add a drop or two of oil to aid in the drilling. Most of the debris that falls inside the tank can be shaken out later. When the holes on the top of the can are drilled out to the correct size, pick a spot on the tank that will be the bottom and drill a hole that is about the same size as your valve. I recommend this set up (Figure 4). This will be used for the drain valve. This drain valve allows the removal of moisture from the tanks, just like in real compressors.



### STEP 3: SOLDERING

**ITEMS NEEDED:** Silver solder & flux, propane torch, tank(s), sandpaper, wire brush, all fittings, safety goggles

**NOTE: WELDING SKILLS ARE A MUST!** If you don't have some experience welding, then I suggest that you find someone with experience to do it for you.

**DO NOT BRAZE THE PARTS** - I did this on the first prototype and the heat involved literally melted the fittings, although I did get a good braze joint. Oh Well! Live and learn.

In order for the solder to stick, the surfaces need to be free of oils, rust and paint. Use a wire brush and/or sandpaper to clean the surface down to bare metal. Apply the flux to both surfaces and assemble them.

1. Take a 1/4" x 2 1/2" brass nipple and insert it in the center hole (This hole is for the line in and line out). Solder it in place. Repeat for the other tank.

2. Take a 1/4" flare x 1/8" fine pipe thread (fpt) 90 elbow. Insert this into the PRV hole and solder this in place. Don't repeat yet.

3. Solder the drain valve(s) in place. Try to keep these as low as possible in the tank. That way almost all of the water can drain out.

4. Let everything cool down and inspect the solder joints. They should be clean and strong.

5. Dry fit the balance tube/drain assembly on the tank completed in step 2. Take this and use it the positioning of the second 90 elbow. Take note of its position. Disassemble and solder into place as in step 2. Repeat step 4.

### STEP 4: ASSEMBLY OF TANKS

**ITEMS NEEDED:** Teflon tape or pipe dope, prepared tank(s), remaining fittings

**NOTE:** I made my setup with two tanks, so I have a balance tube between them. If you are using one tank just omit the balance tube, you will have a line in from the compressor and a line out to the airbrush. At the end of this article there will be a drawing of a general one-tank setup.

Wrap all threaded portions of pipe with teflon tape or pipe dope. To keep the tape from unwinding, wrap in a clockwise fashion (Figure 5). Because all of the fittings are NPT (pipe

thread) they **DO NOT BOTTOM OUT** like a nut on a bolt. Rotate the fittings together until snug, then with some pliers or pipe wrench turn the fitting in the direction you want the final assembly to be. **DO NOT OVER TIGHTEN—IT MAY STRIP THE PIPE AND/OR FITTING**

#### ASSEMBLE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Take the brass "T" coupling, insert two brass nipples and breeder valve as in the ex-

ploded view. Do not snug together yet.

2. Connect the tanks with the balance tube assembly and snug them together as explained earlier.

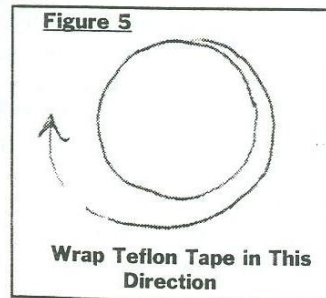
3. Use a 3/8 CMP (compression) x 1/4 FPT elbow. This will be the line in from the compressor. At the compressor head, if you don't have a threaded fitting already, you will need to attach one. Use a 1/4 x 2 brass nipple, on the end use a 3/8 CMP x 1/4 FPT elbow at this end also.

4. Leave the pressure regulator/gauge and water trap off until everything is assembled to keep from damaging it.

### STEP 5: MOUNTING

**ITEMS NEEDED:** 1/4" plywood or similar item, compressor, partially assembled tanks, bailing wire or nylon zip ties, rubber padding, drill & bits, something to mount tanks above compressor (such as threaded rod, 1x1 pine stock or wood dowel).

Figure 6 shows the overall setup to mount the tanks on the





wood to get an idea where to drill the holes. Drill four holes in the corners of the wood for mounting later. Drill two holes on each side of the tank, for a total of eight holes. Tie the tanks to the wood with bailing wire or nylon ties. If you want, for noise insulation put a piece of rubber between the tanks and wood. Mount your compressor to another piece of wood with nuts and bolts. You may have to drill mounting holes in the feet of the compressor. Take four pieces of equal length 1x1" pine, wood dowel, or threaded rod, and permanently mount the tanks

3. For those of you that have more than one airbrush, it may be a good idea to add quick connects. You will need one female coupler, for the compressor side, and however many

male connectors for your airbrushes. Make sure that you get the same series of connector, i.e. Type M Female connector will only accept Type M male connectors. Failure to have the same kind of fittings may result in the connections leaking or not fitting at all.

#### OPERATIONAL NOTES, CAUTIONS AND ADVICE

- Figure 7 shows exploded views of the assemblies and general setup for a single tank.

- Before you begin to paint open the bleeder valve, so that the compressor will run. When you're

ready to paint, simply close the bleeder valve, adjust your air pressure and paint. When finished, open the bleeder valve and shut off the compressor

Don't let the compressor IDLE for extended periods of time w/ out opening the bleeder valve. Failure to do so may damage either the compressor, blow apart one of the solder joints on the tanks, or blow apart the airbrush line from excessive pressure. In turn, this may cause personal injury.

- Always, before starting to paint, drain the tanks of any moisture. Doing this, along with a water trap, will greatly reduce or prevent water contamination of paint.

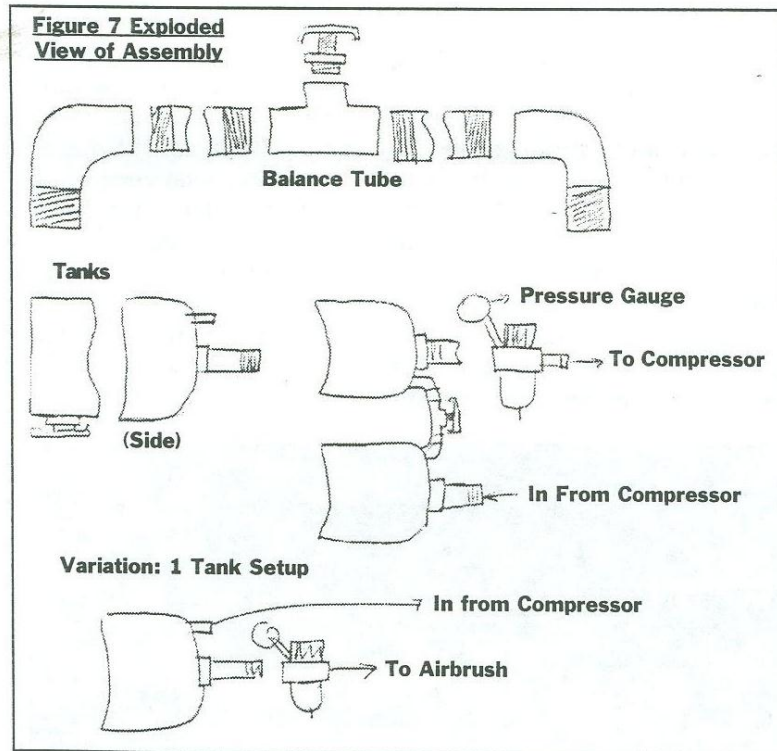
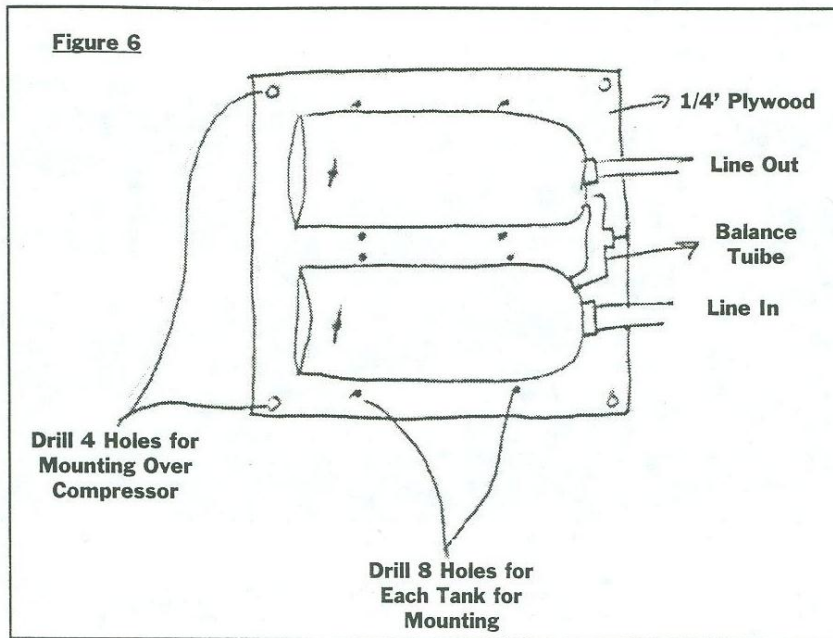
- To set the air pressure, depress the trigger of your airbrush to let the air flow. Turn your pressure regulator to the desired pressure. One side note here: for every 20-25 feet of air hose the PSI in the hose after the regulator drops approximately 5 PSI.

- Periodically check your solder connections for leaks, cracks, or corrosion. If you find any, FIX THEM RIGHT AWAY to prevent future problems.

- It is very important to remember that your tanks are not storage tanks like those in full-size compressors, where they shut off at a pre-set PSI setting and start again at a certain low pressure.

- For those of you who would like one of these setup for your own use, but you don't have the means to make one.

I am willing to build this setup for you. Please contact me at (408) 262-5412 between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m., and we can work something out.

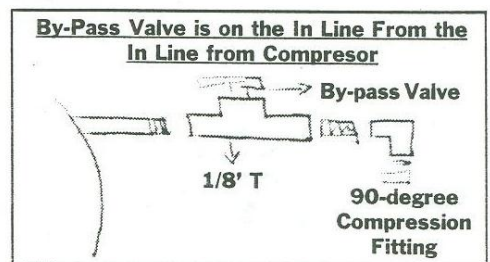


above the compressor. Be sure to leave enough room between the tanks and compressor head (about 4-5 inches). Also be sure to leave enough room so that you may drain the tanks from time to time.

#### STEP 6: FINAL CONNECTIONS

1. Connect the compressor to the tanks with a few inches of 3/8 copper refrigerator tube. Put the tube in the compression fitting and tighten.

2. Now connect the pressure regulator/gauge and water trap to the other CV location.







"Putt Putt Maru," the mount of ace Charles H. MacDonald, during 1944. Decals for this plane are provided in the *Minicraft 1:48 P-38J*.

## P-38 Lightning reviews: Hasegawa, Revell

Continued from page 1

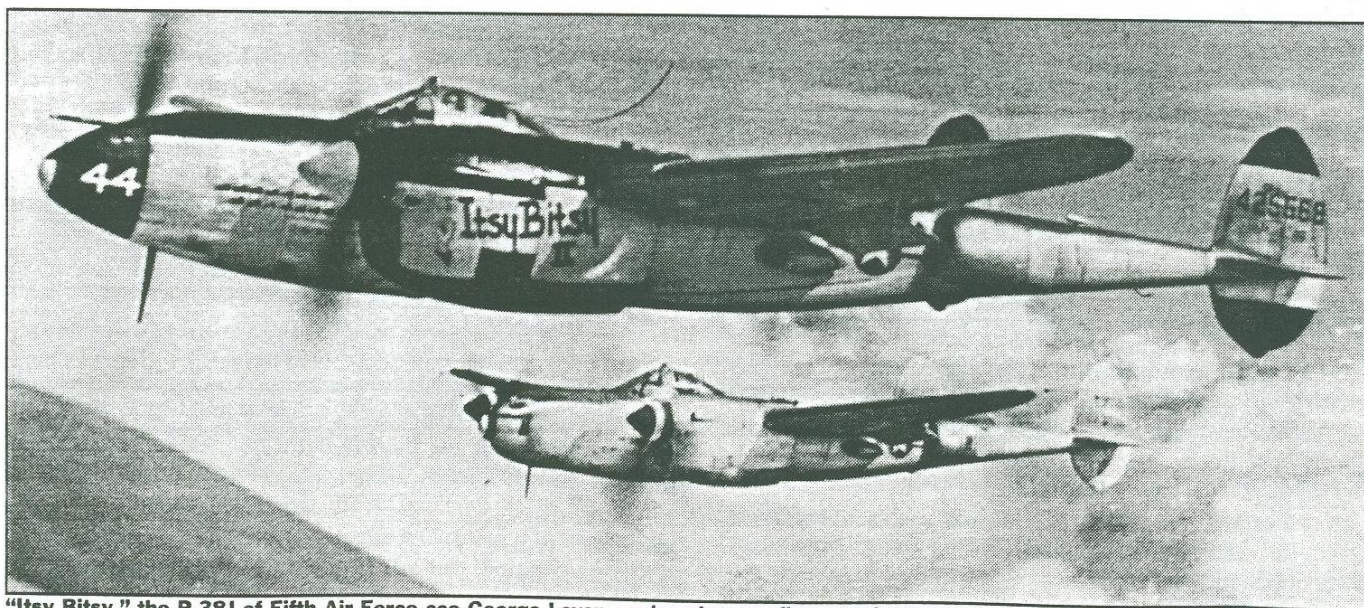
can redo it, BUT WHY DO YOU SPEND ALL THAT MONEY only to do half the same work that an *Airfix* or *Revell* kit at half the cost requires? Do you sense why I called this a "golden calf?" Feel free to write a counter-review!

Recommended, but only with fair warning! (P.S. - this may come out in the *Italeri* line)

*Minicraft 1:48 P-38E*; *Minicraft 1:48 P-38J*; *Minicraft 1:48 P-38M*

I have only the "E" and "M" kits, so I must infer about the "J." Really a swift kit, this. The parts breakdown shows common mold trees that go with each edition. The beef I have with kits is the use of PVC tires with no provision of styrene substitutes (Geez, even *Williams Bros.* offers this!). There's

more detail inside of the cockpit than the *Monogram* kit, the gear bays are better, and there are no rivets to contend with. The fine-line engraving is very sweet and, of course, right now we are getting fresh first moldings so the surfaces are quite smooth out of the box—perfect for natural metal buffs (pun, any one?). Although the "E" and "M" kits are set out as painted camouflage birds, there were bare metal versions of both. The "J" was often seen that way and *Minicraft* includes markings for "Putt Putt Maru" for their kit edition. This looks to be very much the modeler's choice competitor and I recommend you look at one before buying the *Hasegawa* for more money just because of their name. Or better yet, treat yourself to one of each! I expect some in-depth reviews will be forthcoming by the time you read this, so I'll move on.



"Itsy Bitsy," the P-38J of Fifth Air Force ace George Lavan, and a wingman fly toward a target in October 1944.



### Hasegawa 1:48 P-38F/G/H

I love the *Lightning*, what can I say? I bought a copy of this kit—just to review it (sure that's the ticket). After taping up the major parts of *Monogram*, *Minicraft*, and this *Hasegawa* kit, I set them three abreast on a bare wood table. They all come damn close to shape, proportion, and overall look. If you took the rivets off the *Monogram* kit, it shows how well the older kit holds up to its new challengers. The *Hasegawa* kit probably rates highest for cockpit and I do prefer the styrene tires, but I don't get an overwhelming sense of this kit being far and away the one and only 1:48 P-38.

Until we get some number of them built, my recommendation is that you look at this as a set of trade-offs such as that of the competing quarter-inch *Spitfires* (*Hasegawa*. vs. *Tamiya*).

### Hasegawa 1:48 P-38J

Well, I have to leave someone out, don't I? There are modelers out there right now with a fire in their eye for this kit, I am sure. So why not write a little about why this is THE P-38 YOU MUST BUILD. Me, I'm going to duck out while you go get a snack, and hope someone gives me the kit for free so I can check it out. A blind recommendation, based on the other *Hasegawa* P-38.

### Revell 1:32 P-38J (also Droop Snoot)

Big. VERY BIG. It came out in both fighter and glass nose (Snoot) editions, but I'm not sure that the two versions were

ever offered in the same box. It looks and feels a lot like a *Monogram* P-38 kit on steroids, as the rivets are less pronounced but about same size! The weakest point of the kit is that, for its size, the details are all basic, a concession probably due to cost vs. return of this kit when the molds were cut. The cockpit gives you panels, sidewalls, seat, and flight stick, all nicely molded as individual pieces. The rest of the kit is the same way—a few well-made large pieces assemble up into sub-assemblies quickly. There are two engines with firewalls given, and V rocket launcher trees and drop tanks are provided for underwing stores. The option of moving canopy hatch is another notable good point. The entire model looks very good built up; it just requires a fair amount of added detail to lend it real character. The few I have seen done were at contests; the ones that were more out of box just looked like big simple models while the detailed (not super, just attentively to the basics) really took on the aircraft's persona.

If you seek a challenge to really sink into without losing your next life, I'd recommend this model.

That's the end of this particular phase of my pursuit. I push the keyboard away hoping that at least some of this madness may have moved you to look at these birds. Thanks again to Chris, Bob, Bill and Javier for their extra feedback that got me to finish this!

## Winners from the 1995 Kickoff Classic contest

### A. 1:72 Single Engine Jet or Rocket-Powered Aircraft

1. MiG-21MF, Dennis Bruno
2. F-86E *Sabre*, Pat Sharpe
3. *Bachem Natter*, Jim Gordon

### B. 1:72 Multi-engine Jet Aircraft

1. Il-28 "Beagle," Bill Dye
2. QF-4B *Phantom II*, Marc Wilson
3. XP-87 *Blackhawk*, Bill Dye

### C. 1:72 Single Engine Propeller-Driven Aircraft

1. Pw 190A-3, Roy Sutherland
2. P-36A *Hawk*, Bill Dye
3. P-51D *Mustang*, Pat Sharpe

### D. 1:72 Multi-engine Propeller-Driven Aircraft

1. Do 24, Thomas Cole
2. B-50D *Superfortress*, Dave Hansen
3. B-24H *Liberator*, Walter Hern

### E. 1:48 Single Engine Jet or Rocket-Powered Aircraft

1. He 162A, Chuck Speir
2. F-16A *Fighting Falcon*, Milt Poulos
3. F-16 *Fighting Falcon*, Jim Sigman

### F. 1:48 Multi-Engine Jet Aircraft

1. F-15C *Eagle*, Randy Rothaar
2. F-14A *Tomcat*, Tom Trankle
3. F/A-18 *Hornet*, Jim Sigman

### G-1 (split) 1:48 Single Engine Propeller-Driven Aircraft, Allied

1. *Spitfire* Mk.I, Ben Pada
2. F4F-4 *Wildcat*, John Bergsing
3. *Spitfire* Mk.Vb Trop, John Bergsing

### G-2 (split) 1:48 Single Engine Propeller-Driven Aircraft, Axis

1. Me 109G, Bob Phillips
2. Fw 190A-4, Mike Braun
3. Me 109F-4 Trop, John Bergsing

### H. 1:48 Multi-Engine Propeller-Driven Aircraft

1. He 111, Randy Rothaar
2. P-38 *Lightning*, Rong Darcey
3. Me 410, Ron Darcey

### I. Biplanes, All Scales and Eras

1. Fokker D.VII, Don Barnes
2. Fokker Dr.I, Larry Roberts
3. I-153, Jeff Hamblen

### J. 1:32 Aircraft, all types

1. Me 262, Mark Hernandez
2. MiG-29 *Fulcrum*, Michael Williams

### K. Civil Aircraft, all scales

1. B-26B Firebomber, Randy Rothaar
2. Gee Bee Racer, Denis Winters

### L. Rotary Wing Aircraft

1. CH-53D *Super Stallion*, Randy Rothaar
2. AH-1 *Cobra*, Fred Shammass

### M-1 (split) 1:35 Soft-skin Military Vehicles, post-1945

1. M923A1 5-Ton Cargo Truck, Jim Lewis
2. M11 UltraV VBL, Jim Lewis
3. M997 HMMWV Maxi-Ambulance, Jim Lewis

### M-2. (split) 1:35 Soft-skin Military Vehicles, pre-1945

1. Canadian Ford Tactical Truck, Jim Lewis
2. Quad Gun Tractor, Randy Heiler

### N-1 (split) 1:35 Main Battle Tanks

1. M4A3 Sherman, Bryan Finch
2. PzKw 1B, Laramie Wright
3. Merkava Mk. II, Stan Smith

### N-2 (split) 1:35 Light Armored Vehicles

1. Hummel, David DeAnde
2. SdKfz 251, Cardenas Carlos
3. SdKfz 251, Steve Sterling

### O. 1:72 Military Vehicles

1. M4A1 Sherman, Dave Parks
2. Panzer IA, Jim Gordon
3. Panzer IB Command Tank, Jim Gordon

### P. Ships, 1:350 and larger

1. U.S.S. *Missouri*, Gary Ross

2. Battleship *Tirpitz*, Brian Menges
3. *Typhoon*-class submarine, Frank Beltran

### Q. Ships, 1:351 and smaller

1. IJN *Tama*, Sami Arim
2. Japanese subchaser, Rick Heinbaugh

### R. RN Frigate 1805, Rick Heinbaugh

### R-1 (split) Civilian Vehicles, Low Riders

1. '54 Ford, Freddy Alfaro
2. '65 Impala, Freddy Alfaro
3. '63 Impala, Johnny Galvan

### R-2 (split) Civilian Vehicles, Street Cars

1. Mercedes AMG, Samuel Tolentino
2. Ferrari 365 (cutaway), Samuel Tolentino

### S. Caspita Subaru, Samuel Tolentino

### S. Competition Vehicles, Open Wheel

1. McLaren TAG MP4/2c, John Splichal
2. F1 Lotus 102B, Edward Reyering

### T. Competition Vehicles, Closed Wheel

1. Baby Ruth Thunderbird #1, Jim Yessaian
2. Alka Seltzer Pontiac, Jim Yessaian

### U. Space Vehicles & Science Fiction

1. U.S.S. *Pasteur* Medical Ship, Randy Rothaar
2. M196 Light Scout Hovercraft, Mark Nohrnberg

### V. Figures

1. U.S. Bazookaman, Paul Katerges
2. Afrika Corps Infantryman, Paul

### Katerges

3. Officer Yuki from *Silent Mobius*, Brian Sakai

### W. Prehistoric

1. T-Rex Skeleton, Mike Burton
2. Stegosaurus Skeleton, Mike Burton

### X. Out-of-the-Box

1. Nissan 300ZX, Samuel Tolentino
2. Matilda Mk. II tank, Steve Sterling

### Y. Dioramas

1. Lebanon Diorama: "A Room With A View," Mark Bernardo
2. "The Oldest Profession," Jerry Takahashi

### Z. Wash & Wear," Brian George

### Z. Hypothetical Vehicles

1. PZL-11 Racer, Bill Ferrante
2. Lippisch P13a, Mark Hernandez

### AA. Junior Aircraft

1. Bf 109E-417, Jason McChristian
2. P-51K *Mustang*, Jason McChristian

### AB. Junior Miscellaneous

1. V-2 Rocket, Javier Romero
2. Sequest Stinger, Randy Rothaar (proxy)

### BB. Junior Military Vehicles

3. Doodlebug Combine Car, Bob Miller (proxy)

### BB. Junior Military Vehicles

1. M60A1, Jason McChristian
2. Challenger I Mk3, Jason McChristian

### CC. Junior Civilian Vehicles

1. '37 Ford Roadster, Israel Peralta
2. '49 Mercury, Israel Peralta
3. '59 Chevrolet El Camino, Israel Peralta

### DD. Junior Ships

1. Sequest Submarine, Phuc Tran
2. U.S.S. *Missouri*, Nicholas Heinbaugh



# The day the NACA bombed Milpitas

By Bob Miller

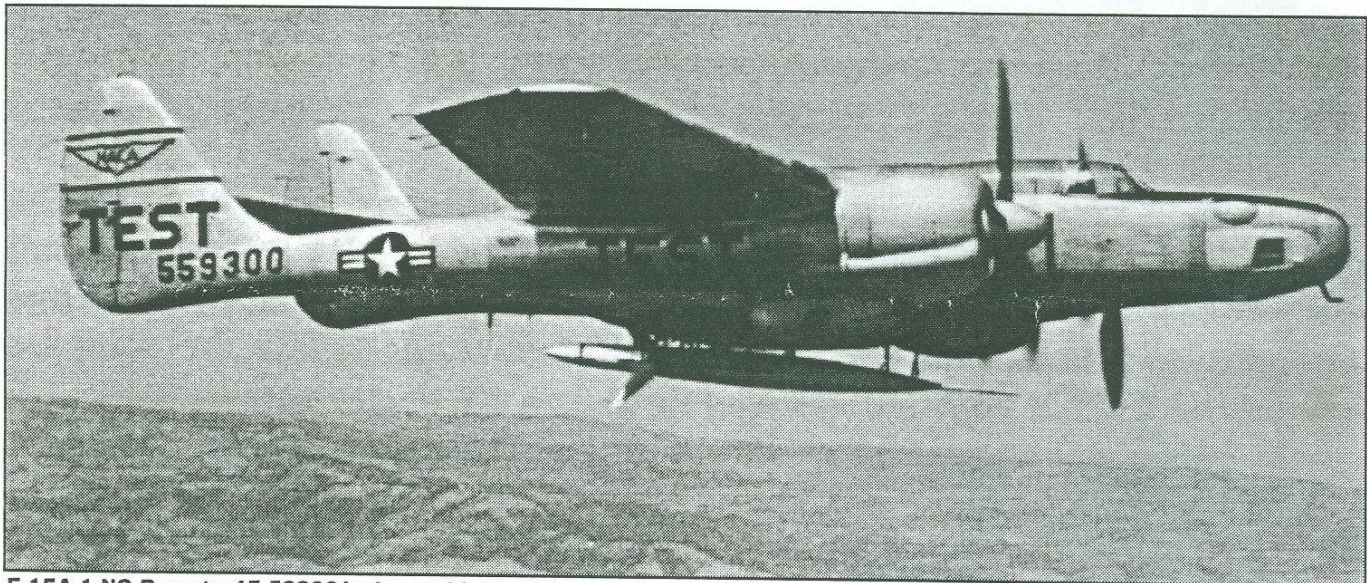
When I set out to describe some NACA-Ames airplanes that I suggested as good modeling subjects, there was one I planned to save for myself. But, I am slow to finish anything, and at my age, I may never get there, so, what the heck...

Photos are occasionally seen of a P-61C and an F-15A Reporter with a streamlined, aerodynamic "shape" mounted like a torpedo under the center nacelle. These came from around 1947, when transonic and supersonic testing was being done here by dropping shapes from high altitude and telemetering the data. A parachute opened later to save the model, but it still finished the flight by spearing its nose probe well into the ground.

NACA appeared to have first used the technique at Langley's Wallops Island range in about 1944 or '45, but I haven't yet found the first reports. In 1946, "Bomb-Drop Tests," as they were called here, were proposed at Ames, and

charger packs well, but the aft end details are missing. The *Reporters* were pretty obscure birds, so this represents a unique opportunity to model one with a story, as well as NACA test markings. These included, for the -C, the white block "TEST" atop the right wing.

It gets a bit speculative, but you could model the combination with a P-61A. Ames' Seth Anderson, our ultimate "Corporate Memory," says that while the actual tests were done at Muroc from altitudes like 43,000 ft, the first checkout drops were done out of Moffett, in empty areas to the east. The actual release was by a mechanic in the third (radar-operator's) seat, with the pilot up front and the crew chief or one of the project people riding the second seat. Since the mechanic doing the actual drop saw nothing out front, he had to be told when to release, and hand signals were agreed on, I presume as a backup to a lost-intercom situation. (This gets interesting because, as *Monogram* models their 1:48 kit, there are two



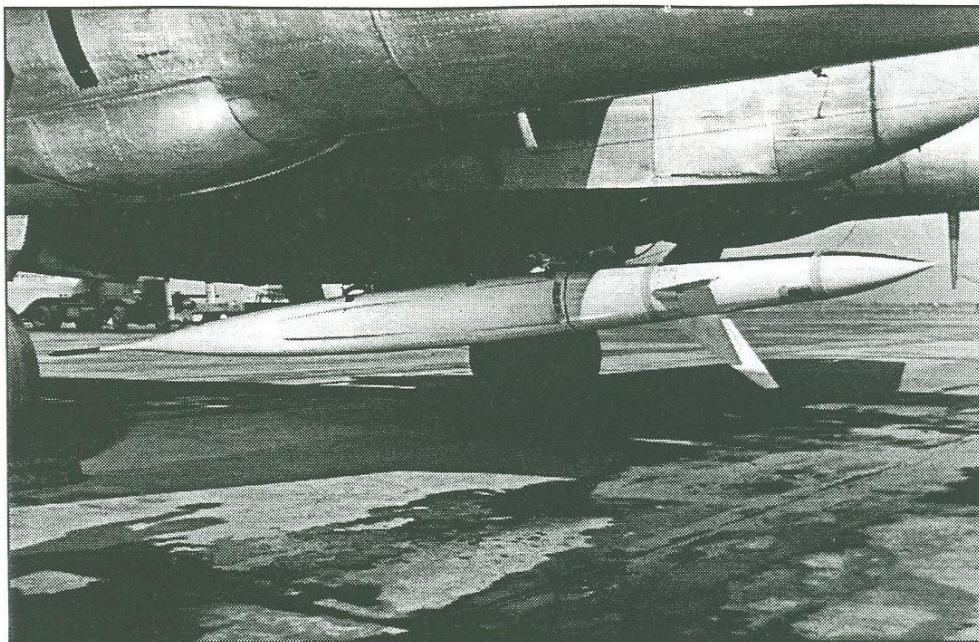
**F-15A-1-NO Reporter 45-59300 is shown with an aerodynamic test shape. This plane was delivered to Ames on Feb. 6 1948, and served until October of 1954, when it was salvaged by the Navy.**

Washington approved, though grudgingly because of the duplication of effort. Things must have moved quickly thereafter, because quite a series of tests were made, using the same basic fuselage and cruciform tail. Photos show delta and swept wings on shapes, and one wingless one with an experimental inlet. One we'll meet later had a wing planform much like the X-15. Most dropped at zero-lift, but one report described a control package that held a constant-lift condition.

For modelling the "Bomb," the photos included are about the best data available. The fuselage is round and continuously curved. Wings and tail surfaces were thin, perhaps 3-5 percent, and the airfoils appeared to have been simple, circular arcs top and bottom, with sharp leading edges. Modelling the P-61C would take effort, because it was a turbocharged version of the *Widow*, with underslung turbocharger packs just aft the engines. I am told there are conversion kits to model either the -C or the F-15, but I haven't seen one. Photos are available showing the front of the turbo-

bulkheads between those seats that would have precluded seeing through. Magazine articles from 1945-46 show an open frame behind the second seat, but the hydraulic reservoir low on the right side should at least be cut out of the bulkhead and installed. I have a Northrop photo that shows all the electronics and sheet metal panels removed from the radar operator's panel, leaving just framing and trays, so presumably this is the condition the Ames aircraft was in at the time. There are spar carry-through's ahead and abaft the turret, and these would be quite visible with open bulkheads.) Seth describes one of the first tests, with the second seat occupied by a crew chief who had a habit of "talking with his hands." He was apparently having a rather animated conversation with the pilot, when the young mechanic looked up and (you've got to have guessed what's next) believed he saw the release signal. The Bomb, which must have been pretty heavy to go supersonic in its dive, ripped into a South Bay orchard, reportedly causing no significant damage. (Sometimes I wonder what the neighbors thought of Ames, then.)





An aerodynamic shape mounted on the F-15 Reporter. Note the mounting hardware.

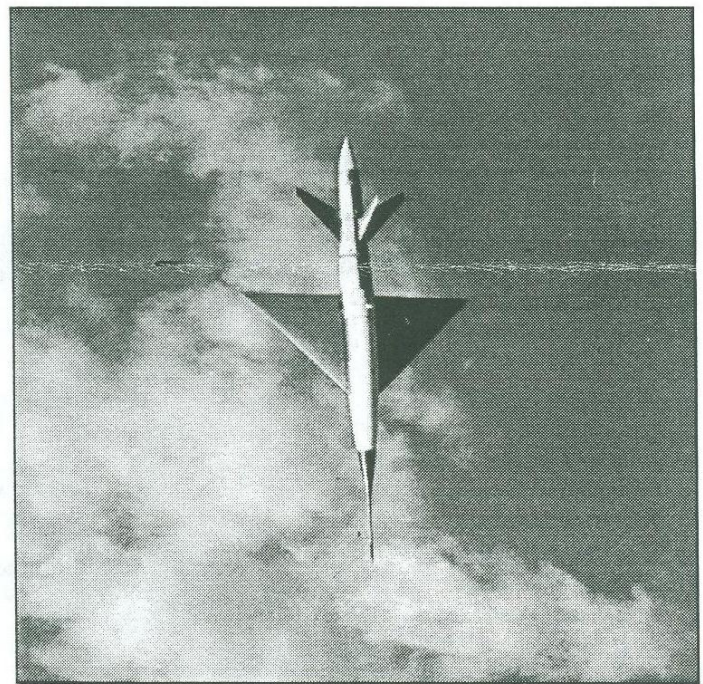
X-15-wing version, hung under the P-61A. The little plaque at the front was going to say "THE DAY THE NACA BOMBS MILPITAS".

Post script: In trying to understand the bulkhead issue, at one point I called the Research Division at the Air Force Museum. Though I didn't copy down his name, I had met the guy before and found him knowledgeable, helpful, and an IPMS member who knows exactly what we're about. He researches aircraft all the time for outfits like ERTL, and says there's no charge for "a few" Xerox copies of anything they have. Call 513-255-3284, or write USAF Museum, Research Division, 1100 Spatz St., Wright-Patterson AFB, 45433-7102.

Washington soon had second thoughts and caused the project to be cancelled, maybe because Yeager and his XS-1 came along about this time and seemed to make it redundant. Still, it had a lingering influence. There was apparently enough data gathered to make the shape with the X-15-like wings useful as a well-characterized "standard shape" for the low-supersonic range, because I have seen photos of it installed in a couple of wind tunnels. During my first summer at Ames, in 1957, I saw the wrap-up of a test in which it was launched from a smoothbored 3-inch naval gun at Mach 1.05 and photographed in flight.

The objective was to develop an analysis that would reconstruct the aerodynamic coefficients from the series of pictures. I found one of the shadowgraphs from that test, a bit the worse for having been folded up in a notebook someplace along the way, but still showing beautiful flow detail. On the original, you can even see the tip vortices coming off the wings. It is rolled enough to show a bit of wingtip above and below the body, and you may notice that the two wingtips appear to have different chords. This is an artifact of the conical-light shadowgraph system: if you average the two, it gives you a true scale reading.

I don't know which design was used for which parts of the program, but my plan was to model my favorite, the graceful



One of NACA's streamlined shapes moments after its drop.

## Display Teams in California

Here's a list of scheduled appearances of the Air Force Thunderbirds, Navy Blue Angels and Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds, compiled and contributed by Cliff Kranz.

### THUNDERBIRDS

April 9: Vandenberg AFB  
 October 1: Salinas  
 October 14-15: March AFB

### BLUE ANGELS

March 18: NAF El Centro

April 28-30: MCAS El Toro

May 6-7: NAS Lemoore

July 1-2: Redding

August 25-27: NAS Miramar

October 7-8: San Francisco

### SNOWBIRDS

September 23-24: NAWS Point Mugu



# The ins and outs of *DML's* OH-6A Loach

By Geoff Krueger

No matter how much you may hate *DML*, if you want a 1:35 *Loach*, this is the only way to go. When you open the box, you are presented with an array of crisply-detailed parts molded in light gray. The scribing includes both raised and recessed panel lines, with rivets that seem pretty true to scale. The fuselage and tail boom assemblies are separate.

Let's start with the cabin. The cockpit consists of two seats (minus seatbelts), an accurately-represented instrument console, and two sets of cyclic, collective and tail rotor pedal controls. The rear cabin is also nicely done, with two jumpseats for additional crew members (one in a folded position), a mount for the external minigun and a rather nondescript box which would contain 7.62mm ammo belts for the crew chief's M-60. With the cabin completed, there is still tons of room for adding little extras. The kit includes a pair of M-16s, an M-60 with ammo belts and an M-79 grenade launcher. *Loach* crews usually strung up a variety of smoke grenades on the front bulkhead. In addition, crew chiefs usually had an M-79, a CAR-15 and a shotgun

stowed under their jumpseat. The pilot had a CAR-15 stowed against the bulkhead between the copilot's seat and his own. Due to the open nature of the *Loach*—they carried no doors in Vietnam for better visibility and for quick exit in the event of a crash—you can go all out with the interior and it *will* be noticed.

After completing the interior, put the exterior halves on. The fit here is rather rough and is a pain to fill, because in sanding most of the raised rivets will go by the wayside. Once this is done, the tail boom assembly attaches without too much trouble.

The rest of the kit is a breeze and the rotors go together like a dream.

The windscreen in the Achilles' heel of this kit. First of all, it is not clear. When I took mine out of the packaging, it looked like somebody sprayed clearcoat over it and then rubbed it on the sidewalk for a while. About an hour of wet sanding with

fine grit sandpaper and a coat of Blue Magic later, my windscreen was somewhat presentable. The other major problem with this part is that the darn thing just doesn't fit right. However, with a little patience and a good pair of tweezers, this can be worked through.

The crew consists of a pilot and a crew chief. The designers had good ideas on their body positions, but the molders fell way short on quality. When the pilot is seated, his feet don't reach the pedals! Another problem, which exists in all of *DML's* figures, is that they look too stiff. This is the result of making every arm, leg, head and torso interchangeable. However, the door gunner is molded in an excellent position if your kit is to be built "in flight," as he is half leaning out the door



A head-on shot of the OH-6A, with the minigun visible on the right and the crew chief's M-60 on the left. The size of the windscreen shows why it's a problem for modelers.

with his M-60 ready. The decals went on the model very nicely. Included are markings for CPT. Hugh Mills' personal aircraft, "Miss Clawd IV," and a rather bland-looking aircraft from the 1/9 cavalry. The only drawback to the decals is the improper fit of the shark mouth on Mills' *Loach*.

Overall, *DML* seemed to have its act together on this kit. Despite the bad windscreen, the fit is acceptable and its scale makes it a great basis for a diorama. There is also a lot of room for any work a scratchbuilder might want to do. On a scale of ten, I would rate this model a 7, though \$30 is a bit much to pay on this kit.



# FEBRUARY MINUTES

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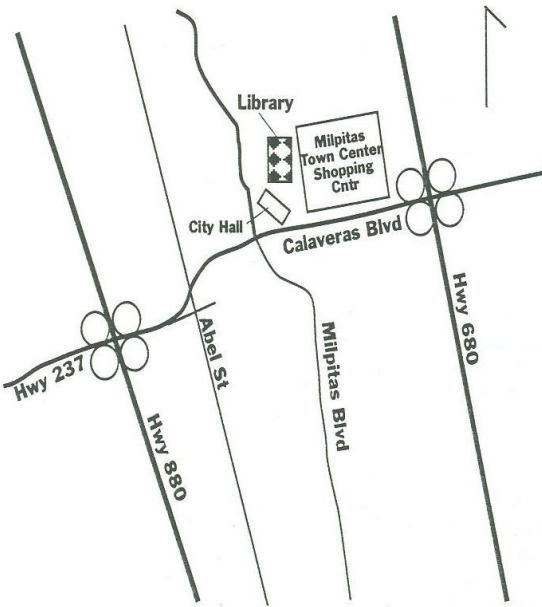
The election of new officers will be held in March, and nominations were put forward at February's meeting: Bill Dye for president (nominated by Mike Burton), Jim Lewis for vice-president/contest director (nominated by Bill Dye), Bill Ferrante for treasurer (nominated by Jim Lewis), and Chris Bucholtz for secretary/editor (nominated by Bert McDowell). Other nominees may volunteer for nomination at the March meeting.

Contests coming: April 8 is HobbyTown USA's bi-annual shindig; Monterey's new club is shooting for a contest on May 7; the Devil Mountain Boys plan their event for May 20.

Now, about model talk... Rich Pedro's compressor and tanks (the subject of the article in this issue) looked a bit like a *Star Trek* spaceship, but has been used on some of Rich's beautiful models, including the vinyl *Horizon* figure of Carnage. Rich is also up-gunning his AC-130 to an "H" standard, packing a 105mm howitzer, and he's working on a 1:48 F-15 that will wear Seymour Johnson war paint. Joel Rojas is working on modifications to a Chevrolet C-1500 station wagon, which will sport a metallic green paint job. Mark Fernandez battled stubborn decals to complete the *Mauve* Lippisch L.19. Stan Muniz, to show how easy we youngsters have it, brought in some models from the early days of the hobby: rough wood forms and paper plans for two biplanes that included little details like cast metal guns and (if you were lucky) a glue-in engine face! Let's hear it for plastic! Mark Wilson tackled *Emhar's* F3H *Demon*, filling and re-scribing the too-deep panel lines and giving it a day-glo paint scheme. Mark also displayed two non-drone related planes, a Philippine P-51 from the *Academy/Minicraft* kit and a *Heller Spitfire* Mk.XVI, and had four other projects in the in-progress stage: a *Airfix* Handley-Page *Jetstream*, a *KP* MiG-15, an *Airfix* O-1 *Birddog*, and an *Emhar* FJ4-B *Fury*, all in glorious 1:72. Incidentally, Mark uses *Model Master* fluorescent red for his hi-viz drone schemes. Rodney Williams is getting ever-so-close to finishing his P-51B in 1:24; he estimates that he's put between 7,000 and 8,000 rivets (of proper scale) on the *Mustang*. For that sort of diligence to detail—good luck at the nationals, Rodney! When Bert McDowell isn't building ship models or designing ship models, he's keeping us up to date on ship models. He displayed the new *Blue Water Navy Northampton*-class cruiser. Bert has a few nitpicks—the wrong radar array, for instance—but says it's a nice casting. Tom Harrison had a ship of his own to show off—a new collaboration between *Tom's Modelworks* and *Iron Shipwright* of a *Gearing* and a *Sumner*-class destroyer. Tom's photo example kills two birds: to port it's a *Gearing*, and to starboard it's a *Sumner*! Haluk Arim kept things "haze gray and underway" with a 1:700 *Benham*-class destroyer, from *Tom's Modelworks*. Geoff Krueger used Bert's formula for water for his diorama featuring Hugh Mills' OH-6A *Loach* (in 1:35, by *DML*) investigating a *Kirin* motorized sampan. Geoff also detailed out an *Italeri* M901 "Hammerhead," stealing bits from other M113-family kits. Bill Ferrante had his PZL.11 racer ready to round the first pylon, adding position lights (they flash "L-A-S-T" in Morse code, perhaps?) and an orange cowl ring. Mike Meek is getting back into the racer business himself, making great strides in his F2G *Corsair* conversion

and his Fw.190 fantasy racer, which will boast a PW-3350 power plant. Mike's weirdest racer-to-be is a real one: Darryl Greenameyer's "Shock Wave," which mates *Sea Fury* Wings, an F-86 tail and a 4360-hp monster of an engine! Richard Lawrence showed his model of the Israelis' innovative anti-aircraft-missile-suppression system: A boosted AGM-45 *Shrike* mounted on a *Sherman* Easy 8 chassis! Richard used the same 1:72 *Sherman* chassis for his Israeli L-33 *Sultan* self-propelled gun, a 155mm monster. Cliff Kranz built two M4 half-tracks as restored museum pieces—one packing a quad-.50 mount, the other configured as a headquarters vehicle. Bob Turner used a rare example of 1:48 armor to build a *Chieftain* in a forest scheme. Dave Sampson's stable of tiny tanks grows: his newest are two Russian T-28s, each with a totally different turret. Chris Bucholtz's T-34B conversion is ready for paint, and it's canopy is being replaced by a scratch-made thermaformed unit. Chris made a male mold of the inside of the kit canopy to form new clear parts so the *Mentor's* cockpit is visible. Bert McDowell's water is awfully crowded: Dave Balderama's *Ohio*-class SSBN is sailing in a sea of it! Mike Burton showed his *Savage* side in the form of two AJs—one the 20-year-old *Airmodel* effort (as in "be prepared to put in a lot of effort") and the more modern and civilized *Rareplanes* offering, complete with nice decals, metal props and landing gear—and the correct shape! Mike says *Rareplanes'* kit has all the features that *Airmodel's* kit was missing! Kris Johns is taking the sandpaper to the *Williams Bros.'* Ford Flivver with a vengeance, but she hopes to complete the '30s-vintage bird. Ben Pada's 1:48 air force is growing fast: his *DML* Fw.190A-8 boasts defense of the Reich markings, and can only be outdone by his exquisite *Hasegawa* Ki-61 *Tony*. Ben painted the green camouflage *after* the decals went on, using a cotton swab dipped in denatured alcohol to make accurate wing "squiggles." Randy Rothaar's just about finished his big *Revell* CH-53D conversion, putting an attractive sand/gray wrap-around scheme on the *Super Stallion*. Larry Roberts' *Lindberg* B-17 made a return visit, proving that you can make an attractive model from a *Lindberg* kit if you use the right attitude. Peter Wong, continuing the evening's theme of "DML sucks," showed off a T-80. Peter had some problems with his paint, which took on an unusual texture, but since he noticed the same sort of texture on some armored vehicles he owns, he concludes that his T-80 is pictured as it will appear in the year 2000! Team Kent McClure qualified a field of neat racers, including a Canat B-type, an Aston-Martin (circa 1950), a 2L Cooper, a McLaren Mk. 2B, a Chevron B-36, a 1949 BRM, and a Lotus 16. In case someone disobeyed the black flag, Kent also had a 1:72 British 2-pounder anti-tank gun by *Lyzard's* *Grin*. Bruce McBride is using all sorts of tricks involving light and the translucency of unpainted styrene to illustrate how lead poisoning in the home occurs; his 1:12 kitchen scene shows how models can be used to educate everyone and not just the military historians. And the model of the month goes to... Rich Pedro, who designed and produced the big collage of club members' work for presentation to club benefactor John Bucholtz! Perhaps it's not a model, but it's quite a neat assembly!

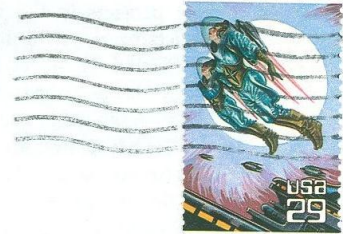




Next whimsical meeting:  
**7:30 p.m.,**  
**Friday,**  
**March 17**  
at the Milpitas  
Public Library,  
**40 N. Milpitas Blvd.**  
For more information, call the  
editor at (510) 428-0474



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