

# THE STYRENE SHEET

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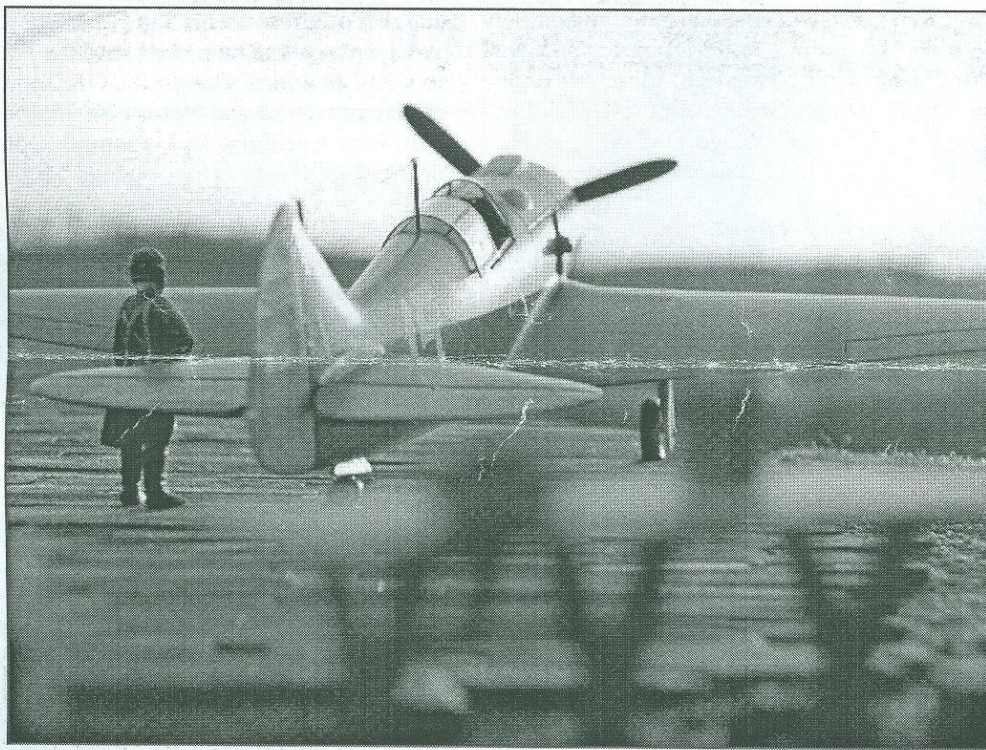
## Vector- 1/48th Lavochkin La-5 (Early Version)

By Floyd S. Werner, Jr.

**History** The La-5 was the amalgamation of the Lagg-3 airframe with a M-82 bomber engine. The resulting airplane took a mediocre airframe and turned it into a match for the Luftwaffe. The new airframe was heavier than the Lagg-3 but the additional power made the La-5 an outstanding fighter plane with good developmental potential.

### The kit

Vector is a new company out of Russia, distributed by Buffies Best. Vector has made resin aircraft engines that are the ultimate in detail and accuracy. The La-5 is their first full resin kit. The kit is molded bubble free in straw colored resin. The details are exquisite. All the parts are easy to remove from the pour gates. There is no flash anywhere. The panel lines are fine, crisp and very nicely presented. You are treated to four vacuformed canopies. Two of each type for those of you who, like me,



are heavy handed and still want to pose them open. The decals are nice and offer options to do three machines. They aren't as crisp as Western decals but appeared to be useable. Considering that they were painted on the real airplanes by unskilled laborers they may be more accurate. You will need to scratch build three things, the antenna masts on

the spine, tail and pitot tube. These are easily done and should cause no problems.

I got an early production version of the kit and the wings and ailerons were one piece but my later production version had separate ailerons, which I thought were a very nice addition. My early production kit had rubber wheels from

A bit of sand, couple of figures, and little camera trick and this well built La-5 is ready for its close up. Avia Equipage that I couldn't bring myself to use (except for the tail one), but the later versions have resin wheels, which are more accurate than the Squadron ones.

The instructions are on one sheet of paper and are pretty basic. Good thing everything is numbers on the instructions. Remove the parts one at a time and attach them and you won't have any problem. You are given an acetate instrument faces to add to the back of the panel.

Continued on page 12

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

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# JANUARY MINUTES

At the January meeting, model talk started with Jared Bishop's AMT "Star Trek: Deep Space 9" U.S.S. Defiant. Jared's model is going to be rigged with lights once it's complete. Paul Bishop's next remote-control submarine is based on the new U.S.S. Gato from Revell. Greg Lamb picked up some after-market parts on eBay to improve the interior of his Academy P-39Q. Greg's also working on 1:72 Fw 190s, one from Hasegawa and a second one from Tamiya, and he's getting small with Platz' 1:144 kit of the P-51. For a change of pace, Greg is working on a Tamiya 1:25 Mazda Miata. Jim Lund brought in a selection of kits developed by John Tarvin of Airframe Models, based up in Burnaby, British Columbia. They included a Fairey LR monoplane, a Halberstadt D.II used by the Turks in 1917, a Blackburn Airedale in Royal Navy colors dating to 1934, and a Royal Flying Corps Short 184 from 1916. Ken Miller's attempts to build some fire-bombers had brought him into contact with some older and rougher models, including an S-2 Tracker, a Cessna O-2 and a Grumman Albatross. Ken's also working on something entirely out of character - an F-4 Phantom - and Monogram's 1:6 visible V-8 kit. Eric McClure wasn't pleased with the tarp on the back of his 1:35 Sherman, so he made one from rolled Milliput that looked the part once it was flattened and painted. He's also working on Revell's 1:72 M2A2 Bradley fighting vehicle. Laramie Wright has two Tamiya Char. B's close to completion, and he's modified the commander's cupola to remove the rivets and make it accurate on both tanks. Ron Wergin's mini-collections were of Spitfires and King Tigers; he had an Airfix Spitfire Mk. V, the Airfix Mk. I and the Italeri Mk. I, and his King Tigers came from Tamiya (1:48) and DCML (1:35). Mike Jackson's also been dabbling in 1:48 military subjects, building Tamiya's Citroen 2CV with an aftermarket set for the interior, a Tamiya Kubelwagen and a Monogram 1:48 fuel truck. Frank Beltran is trying his had at a pain or Hobbycraft kits, the Vampire Mk. I and the Seafire V. Frank's partially corrected the Vampire by squaring off the wingtips. Jack Clark finished off his 1956 Ford in a nifty three-tone scheme, all the more impressive when you realize Jack got the car partially assembled in a bag at the TriCity Classic last year! Mark MacDonald is building a Panther A (early) from the DML kit, and he's particularly inspired by a scheme he found on an Echelon decal sheet. Steve Travis stripped all the chrome from his AMT 1925 Ford, made numerous other improvements, and finished the car with Tamiya rattle-can paint on the outside and Faux Fabric on the inside. Lou Orselli is using vacuformed conversions to get offbeat versions of Luftwaffe planes; his Monogram Me 262 is being converted into the two-seat Me 262B, and he's using the Koster conversion to turn a Hasegawa Bf 109G into a two-seat G-12. Lou is also puttering around on the Hasegawa Macchi MC.202. John Carr tried to build Glencoe's Nieuport 28 as a simple build, but the limitations of the kit are making it anything but simple. The decals exploded, the guns are missing and his dog ate the engine! John's going to use some aftermarket sources to remedy these conditions. Frank Babbitt won a first at the Sacramento contest with his Platz 1:144 Fw 190D-9. Frank says the model went together well and only needed a little scratchbuilding of small items like antennas and retraction struts. A much larger model is Frank's Trumpeter "Badger," which he's building in Iraqi colors. He may finish his Hasegawa 1:72 Draken in Finnish mark-

ings, but he will certainly finish his 1:48 MiG-15UTI trainer in Polish colors. Frank invested a lot of energy in replicating the camouflage scheme based on photos. He's slogging through AML's Mirage IIIC, and he has a 1:72 Meteor NF.13 in the advanced painting stages. Alan Weber's F4U-7 is being finished as a "Black Sheep Squadron" screen star; Alan most recently added navigation lights to his build of the Hasegawa 1:48 kit. Mark Schynert's CMK resin 1:72 Westland Welkin is looking good, even though Mark has a story to tell about amputating the tail and re-attaching it to correct a warp. Mark's other prototype high-altitude fighter is the Kora Vickers 432, which is a much rougher kit and, like the Welkin, is all resin. Andy Kellock's garage is too cold to paint in right now, so he's taken to improving pre-finished models; his latest is a 1998 GTI racer that cost just \$10. The vehicle had some decals pre-applied and a sheet of additional markings for Andy to add. Chris Bucholtz has removed a lot of the exterior detail from Academy's 1:72 Jeep and plans to replace it with wire, photoetch and styrene rod. He's making sluggish progress on his Tamiya 1:72 P-47D thanks to the complex paint scheme he picked, and his Hasegawa F-4B Phantom now has its wings. Due to the engineering of the kit, much of the surface detail was lost on the Phantom, so Chris rescribed them with a scribing tool, a template and a sharpened thumb tack. Gabriel Lee's battle with the High Planes Canberra continues; Gabriel plans to remove all the raised panel lines and re-scribe the model. Veronica Hughes' latest is an Italeri 1:72 AH-1Z Super Cobra, which she says will have a special secret paint scheme on the interior. Chris Hughes had some fun building Tamiya's 1:48 M4A1 Sherman, which he says is a good kit even though it shares some of the problems of its 1:35 ancestor. Chris is also nearing completion of DML's 1:35 M26 Pershing, which he's built out of the box. The kit was based on Jacques Littlefield's example in nearby Portola Valley. Ben Pada put together his lovely Bf 109 as part of a group build on Internet site Aircraft Resource Center. His F-104 was supposed to be for last year's Fremont club contest; Ben's added a Black Box cockpit and filled all the rivets on Hasegawa's 1:48 Starfighter. Bill Ferrante found a photograph of a very dirty Swiss Hawker Hunter, so he decided to do the same thing to Revell of Germany's 1:144 kit. He's also hard at work on a 1:72 Academy P-47D, to which he's added a Tamiya cowling and will add a tail fairing to create a P-47D-30. Kent McClure is building two P-47D 1:72, one from Tamiya and another from Revell of Germany. He says it's interesting to see how two companies engineer the same subject. To continue the Thunderbolt theme, Kent's embarked on a build of Hasegawa's venerable 1:72 J2M1 Raiden; he says it's nice for an old kit. Kent's also working on a Hawk "Weirdo" kit, and he's picked up some Japanese resin models, car caricatures and some sharks. Greg Plummer's building AMT's 1969 Corvair, and he painted the body clear amber over military yellow to get what might be described as metal flake brown mustard. Mike Meek's Revell Trans Am Camaro now sports an enlarged rear spoiler and it's almost ready for paint. He's finished work on a spiffy 1:144 Muroc Models X-1 except for a pesky windscreen, which keeps breaking. In a much larger scale, Mike's embarking on the Planet Models 1:48 Hughes racer, an all-resin model. Mike Woolson's little Volkswagen bug in 1:43 scale was finished using Tamiya paints, which also provided the natural metal finish for his beautiful Minicraft 1:144 C-54. Cliff Kranz' Maquette T-

34/76 involved the conversion of a T-34/85 using kit parts; the new parts were in white and they stood out against the green of the original kit! Cliff's also finished work on an Italeri Horsa glider, featuring wavy D-Day stripes, and an XC-97 conversion made from Academy's C-97 fuselage and the tail and wings from an Academy B-29. Cliff used Engines and Things engines and painted the whole thing with a brush and two coats of Humbrol Metalcote. Dave Balderrama is setting out to "rehabilitate" Testors' re-issue of the old Hawk XF-92, building new landing gear for the landing-gear-less model. Dave plans to finish it in a natural metal scheme. Nick Moran says Revell of Germany's Panzerhaubitze 2000 is impressive yet not good. It took a lot of filling to get it to fit, and then Nick had at it with the Eduard photoetched set. Nick also worked hard to get an Irish Air Corps Gazelle in 1:72, switching from a Heller kit to an Airfix kit and then cleaning up the awful fit before adding Max decals to finish it off. And the model of the month goes to... Postoria Aguirre and his collection of James Bond Aston Martin stuff, including a sweet model and a host of books that helped him prove / disprove the viability of all the stuff jammed into it,

# Scale Model Expo 2007 Review

By Paul Bishop

On Saturday, February 10 I attended the Model Expo in Petaluma sponsored by IMPS Santa Rosa, and Mt. Diablo. It was held in the Petaluma Community Center.

The day was overcast and rainy when we got there at 11 am. The gloomy sky didn't seem to be a deterrent because the parking lot was almost full. I was able to pull my Sequoia into the driveway by the front door to unload my goodies – that was really handy.

Inside was a bustle of activity. Registration was straightfor-

## CONTEST CALENDAR

Saturday, April 14: Silicon Valley Scale Modelers present the 12th Annual Kickoff Classic, the 2007 Regional, at the Santa Clara Convention Center, 5100 Great America Parkway. This year's theme is "Pimp My Model." For more information, contact Chris Bucholtz at (510) 769-8316 or e-mail him at bucholtzc@aol.com, or visit the club website at [www.svsm.org](http://www.svsm.org).

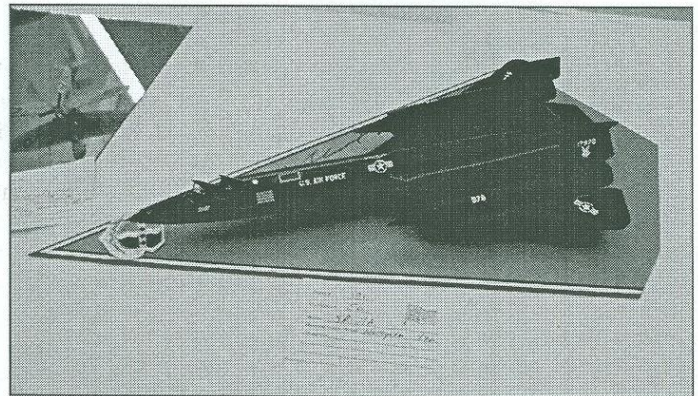
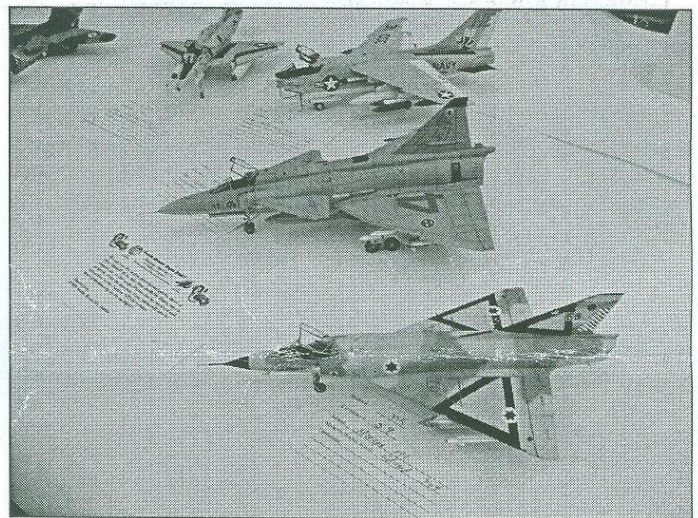
Sunday, July 29: IPMS/Yuba City plans a contest. Details as they become available.

August 22-25 2007 IPMS National Convention This years National IPMS convention will be hosted by IPMS Orange County at the Anaheim Marriott Resort Hotel starting on Wednesday, August 22 and going through Saturday, August 25. Please visit the convention website [www.ipmsusa2007.org](http://www.ipmsusa2007.org) for the latest news.

Sunday, October 14: The Fremont Hornets plan a contest. Details as they become available.

Saturday, October 27: The Shasta Scale Modelers present River Classic 1 at the Win River Resort and Casino, 2100 Redding Rancheria Road. The theme is "Halloween Havoc." For more information, contact Michael Lindsey at (530) 222-4794 or e-mail him at [mflindsey@msn.com](mailto:mflindsey@msn.com).

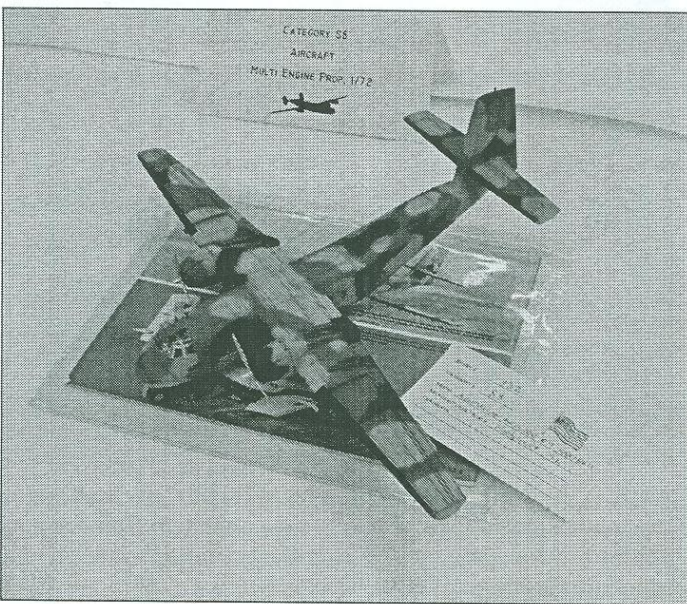
December 3, 2005: IPMS/Silverwings hold their Holiday Classic at the Elk Grove Middle School in Elk Grove, CA. For more information call Michael Scott at 916-351-2321.



ward – it took me about 30 minutes to fill out the cards and get my models positioned. I had to get some help from management to move some models to make room for some my stuff (you know – bigger is always better).

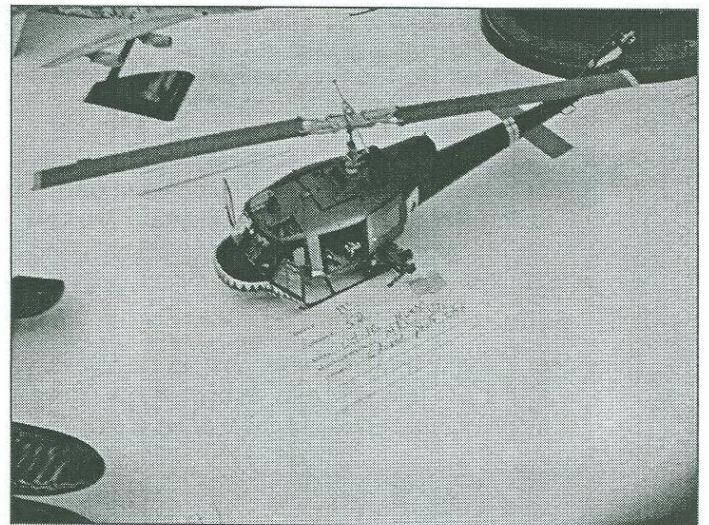
In the exhibition hall there were 3 ½ long rows of tables with the different categories clearly marked, plus a table for the Speed Model Building. Around the room were a lot of vendor

Continued on page 4



picked for a photo shoot to be put on their website and sent to Scale Model Magazine (as I recall). On the opposite end of the hall was another room that had really cool displays for radio control aircraft and also model (read wood) ships. All very interesting.

There were several guys from the club there and I was able to visit with many. I hung out with Milton Pulous for a while



tables set up as well as in the foyer. On the back wall area was a display dealing with r/c cars too. Up on the stage were the displays of the raffle prizes – one for the 1 pm raffle and one for the 3 pm raffle (more on that later). Behind the raffle display was a very nice model railroad display (HO scale). To the left of that Bruce had his photo setup for models that were

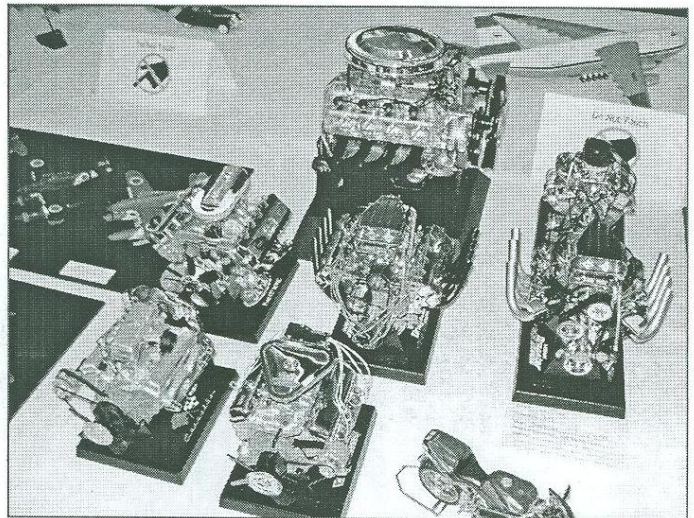
and was able to pick his brain for some good ideas on a spray booth I want to build. He brought his Puma helo and really cleaned up in the recognition area – and rightly so in my opinion – that model is really fantastic. I know he got 1st in the helicopter division and also he got the Sow's ear award for the best model from the worst kit – an award that I think every model show should have. Here is a pic of Chris Bucholtz lecturing some poor guy on the many fine attributes of Obscuro products. You can also get an idea of what was in the main viewing hall.

I didn't come away empty handed – I got some nice awards for my Rattlesnake and my Type VIIC r/c U-Boat. The u-boat got second place even though it was missing one of its two propellers (it's on the bottom of my neighbors pool – ha ha). That shows the value of proper model placement – put the bad side away from view!

I also did rather well in the raffle as you can see from this pic. I purchased 30 raffle tickets and won 6 times – one of which is the new Trumpeter SBD! I love raffles!!

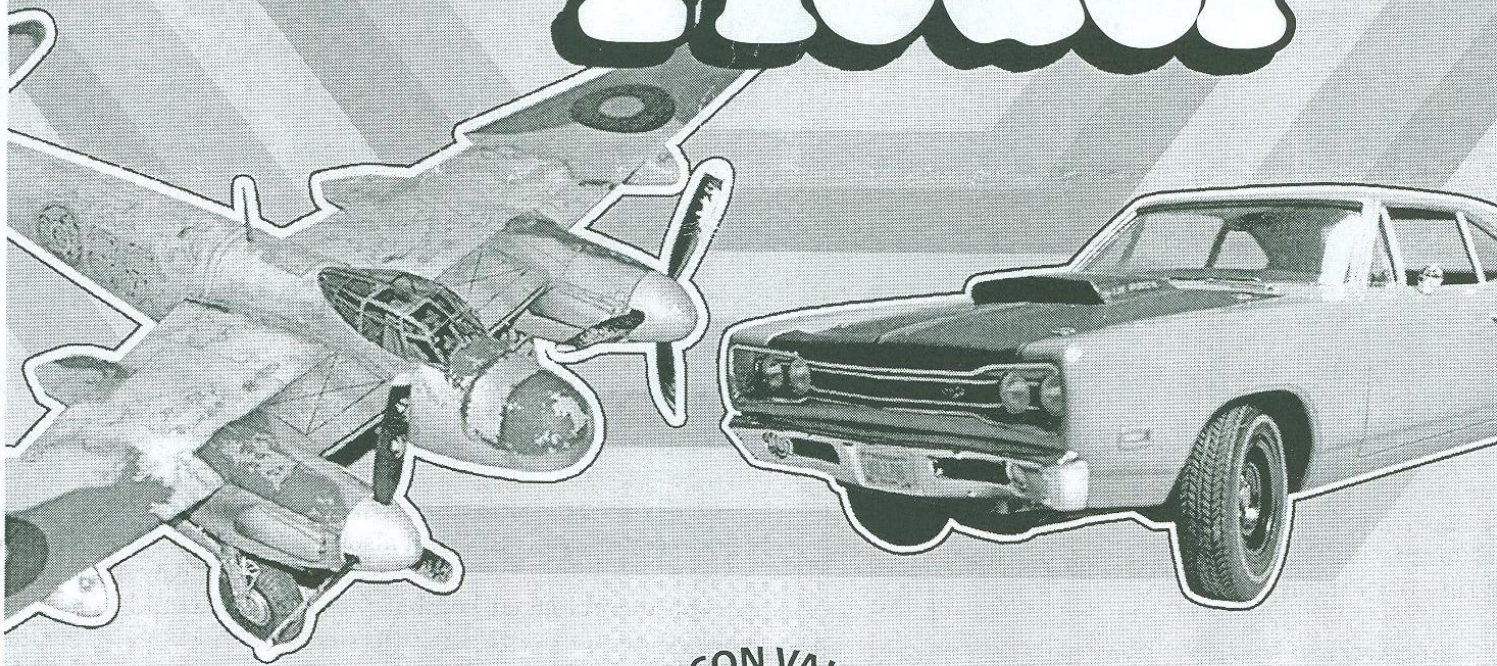
All in all a very nice day – the Expo was run very well by IPMS Santa Rosa and Mt. Diablo - hats off to the Fremont Hornets who provided the judging in a very nice in expeditious man-

ner. The Special prizes were very well done shadow boxes with pictures and signatures of significant people in that particular category, and the category plaques were very nicely done also.

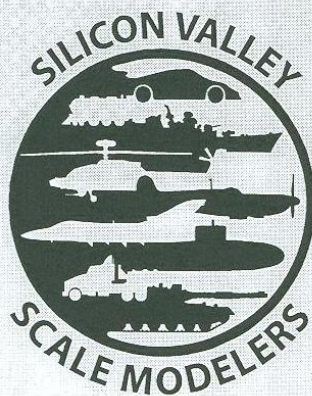


**Silicon Valley Scale Modelers**  
*present the*  
**2007 Kickoff Classic**

# **Pimp My Model**



**9:00 a.m. - Doors Open**  
**12 noon - Registration Closes**  
**12:45 p.m. - Judges Meeting**  
**1:00 p.m. - Judging Begins**  
**3:30 p.m. - Awards**



**April 14, 2007**  
**Santa Clara Convention Center**  
**5001 Great America Parkway,**  
**Santa Clara, CA 95054**

# Building Kombrig's 1/700 Armored Cruiser Rurik

By Vladimir Yakubov

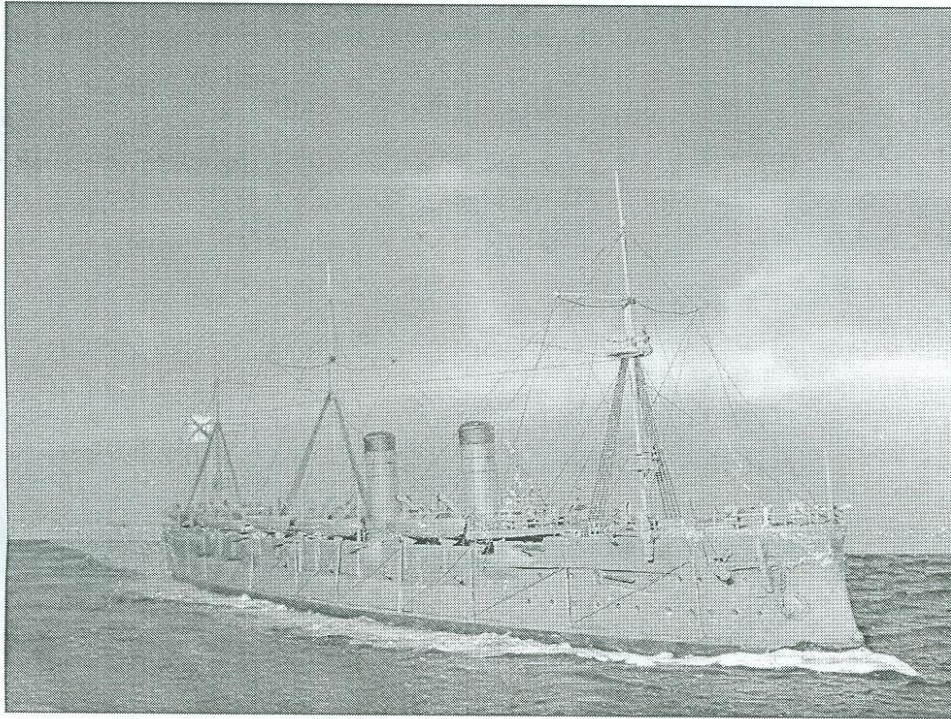
## History

In the mid 1880s Russia and the UK were locked in a cold war. Russia was afraid of the British attack, which happened during the Crimean War. While England was scared of Russian expansion into Central Asia would lead to Russian attack into India. The two countries almost came to blows in 1885 when Russia launched an expedition into Afghanistan. On the naval front that confrontation included a tense stand off between Russian armored cruiser Vladimir Monomakh and British battleship *Agamemnon* in Nagasaki harbor in Japan. Everything ended without firing a shot, but the situation between two countries remained tense. In this atmosphere Russian navy realized that they may have to fight the Royal navy, but at the same time they also realized that they had no hope of winning a straight up battle. Instead they chose, as most of the weaker naval powers have been doing for centuries, to concentrate on commerce warfare. Most of the Russian cruisers of the 1870 and 1880s were designed to be primarily commerce raiders.

In this atmosphere Russian navy started a design of a new armored cruiser Rurik in 1888. It was based on the previous armored cruiser *Pamiat' Azova*, but was 50% bigger. There was a lot of debate in the navy on the characteristics of the cruiser, as it was a biggest cruiser ever built for the Russian navy at the time, but in the end the designers settled on the ship that displaced 10933 tons, was 130.1 meters long at the waterline and had a top speed of 18.8 knots. It was to be armed with four 8"/35 guns and sixteen 6"/35 guns and protected by a 10" armor belt. Since the ship was designed as a commerce raider from a start it had a very long range of 7600 nautical miles and as a carryover from previous days carried a full set of sails to be able to save the coal during long cruises. Rurik was laid officially laid down on 19 May 1890 and launched in November 1892. During it's construction Russian navy was able to purchase license

to produce new quick firing 6"/45 and 4.7"/45 guns from Canet in France and it was decided to replace Rurik's old style 6"/35 guns with sixteen 6"/45 and six 4.7"/45 guns. Due to these and other design changes fitting out took three years and Rurik was finally commissioned into the Russian navy on 16 October 1895.

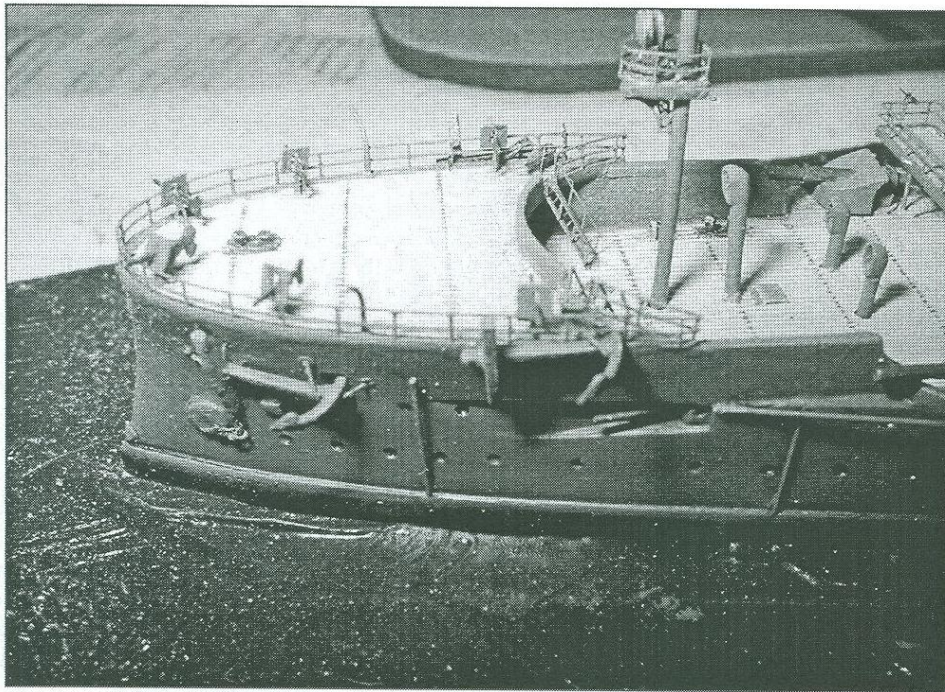
Even before it was commissioned Rurik had a huge impact on the naval world of the time. In June 1895 it was sent to represent Russia during the opening of the Kiel Canal. As



the largest cruiser built at the time with large number of guns extremely impressed the naval officers of the German, French and Royal Navies and caused a reaction in naval circles comparable with appearance of the German Pocket Battleships some 35 years later. British newspapers raised a lot of noise about the "cruiser gap", which in turn resulted in Royal Navy laying down two huge protected cruisers

HMS *Powerful* and HMS *Terrible*, the biggest warships in the world at over 14000 tons. And just like the great panic that was caused by the German *Deutschland* class pocket battleships, it was overblown and over rated. While Rurik was certainly powerful, it also had several large flaws. The artillery was not armored at all, which meant that in any type of prolonged combat the artillery would have been knocked out pretty easily, it was relatively slow - 2-3 knots slower than the cruisers that were coming online in late 1890s, which mean that it could not run away if cornered and finally it is questionable whether a huge ocean raider was needed or whether a smaller ship would have been optimal.

Whatever the design characteristics of the ship were, in late 1895 there was another crisis developing in the world. This time it happened in the Far East where the Japanese have just won the Chino-Japanese War, while at the same time Russia was maneuvering to politically deny them the fruits of the victory. Russian naval forces stationed in the Chinese port Chifu were painted in war camouflage, while emergency reinforcements were dispatched from the Baltic. The squadron consisting of the battleship *Navarin*,



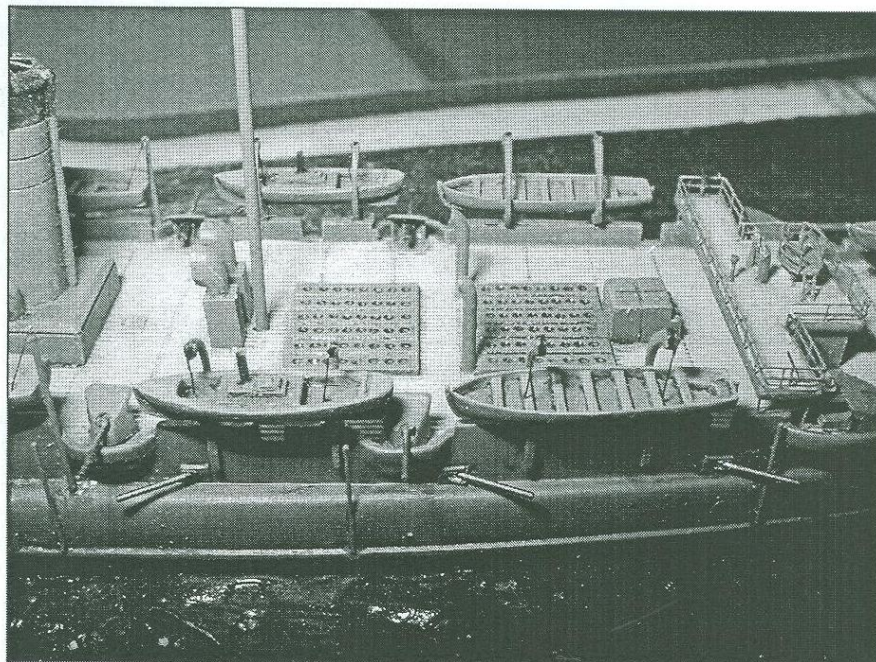
Russian warships were repainted in their dark green camouflage paint and were getting ready for war. At this time Rurik was a part of the Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron with her more modern half-sisters Rossiya and Gromoboy and a protected cruiser Bogartyr. Japan attacked Russia on the night of the 27th of January 1904 and on the same day after receiving notice of war Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron put to sea. In the next seven months they made six cruises and sunk 13 ships, their biggest success came when they intercepted a Japanese troop transport Hitachi Maru in the vicinity of Korea. After the transport refused to surrender it was sunk with at least a 1000 Japanese soldiers and eighteen 11" siege guns destined for Port Arthur.

two armored cruisers Rurik and Dmitry Donskoy and gunboat Grozyaschiy left Kronshtadt on 29 October 1895. Rurik would never return to the Baltic again. The squadron arrived into the Mediterranean Sea in January 1896 and after a two month workup proceeded through the Suez channel and on 2 April 1896 arrived into Nagasaki, which ironically, despite the tensions with Japan was the main Russian base in the Far East.

For the next several years the ship was involved in the active patrolling of the Yellow and Japanese Seas, keeping an eye on Japanese expansion and showing the flag in the ports and training. In March 1898 after some arm twisting of the Chinese, Russia signed a 25 year lease on the Chinese naval base of Port Arthur. To prevent any attempts from the British to occupy the port before the negotiations were completed Russian ships including Rurik were sent to Port Arthur in January of that year. On an interesting side note, Russian admiral in charge of the squadron who made an inspection of the port had a very negative report about it and in that report outline all of the problems that the Russians would have 6 years later trying to defend it, but of course the bureaucracy didn't pay attention to that report and the main Russian naval base moved to Port Arthur in 1899. In 1900 Rurik was involved in the multi-national effort to stamp out the Boxer rebellion and soon after that it went in for a refit during which its sailing rig, including the bowsprit was removed.

By the end of 1903 the tensions between Russia and Japan finally reached the boiling point and Japan started to actively prepare for war. Russia was not pursuing the war, but even the Russian military and politicians realized that at this point war was inevitable,

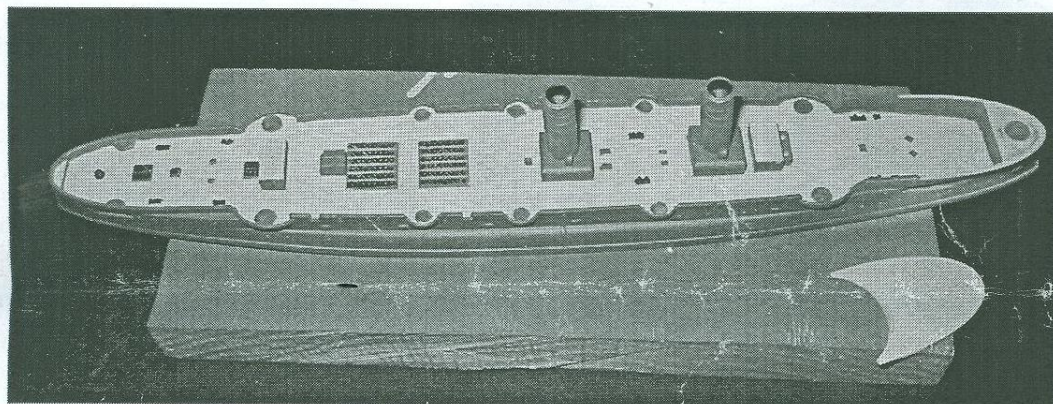
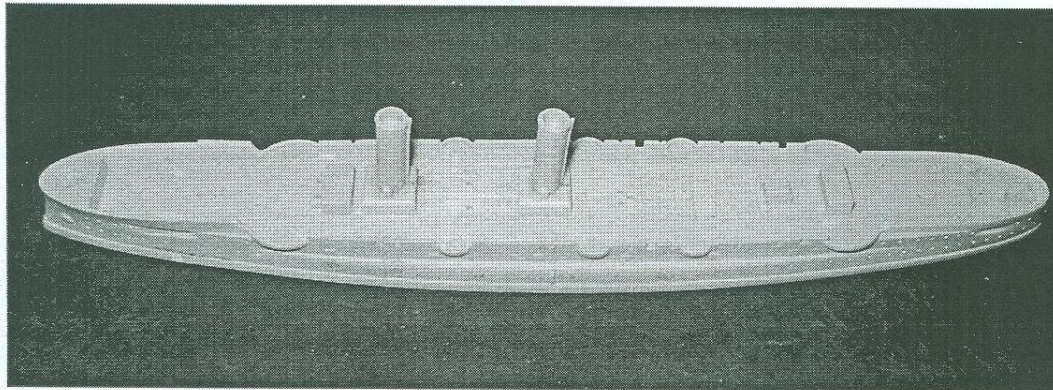
The end for the combat operations of the Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron came as it comes typically for such raiders, cornered by superior force and unable to run. It happened on 1 August 1904, when Vladivostok cruisers were ordered to sortie to rendezvous with the main Russian fleet attempting to break out of the besieged Port Arthur. Unfortunately Russian fleet was defeated and was forced to turn back to Port Arthur, but the squadron was unaware of that happening since radio communications were still in their infancy. As the cruisers steamed to the rendezvous point they were intercepted by Admiral Kamimura with 4 armored and 2 protected cruisers 36 miles north of Tsushima, near a Korean port of Ulsan. Russian squadron slowed by old Rurik (able to do only 17 knots at the time) was unable to evade more modern Japanese cruisers. Rossiya, flying the flag of Admiral





lessen, was the lead ship of the Russian column, followed by Gromoboy with Rurik bringing up the rear. The battle began at 0523 at 8500m. Within half an hour Rurik was damaged and started to fall behind the other two ships. Russian squadron made numerous turns to enable Rurik to catch up, but at 0640 a hit on the rudder put her out of control and unable to maneuver. At 0657 Rurik was able to fix the steering and was for a short time was able to keep up, but at

hopelessness of the situation and was determined to prevent the ship from falling into Japanese hands and ordered the sea-cocks to be opened and scuttled the ship. The ship sank at 1020. During the engagement Rurik suffered heavy losses. Out of 796 sailors 193 died and 229 were wounded and out of 22 officers 9 were killed and 9 were wounded.



0720 once again fell behind. Two other Russian ships tried to interpose themselves between wounded Rurik and the Japanese, but by 0850 it was apparent that Rurik was lost and Russian ships made their final turn toward Vladivostok drawing all of the four Japanese armored cruisers with them. Two of the Japanese protected cruisers were left to deal with heavily damaged Rurik which was only able to respond with few guns. Last shots were fired at 1005 when the Japanese shell burst in the Rurik's conning tower killing her captain, captain Trusov and leaving a Junior Gunnery Officer, Lieutenant Ivanov, in command. He realized the

For a long time Rurik's sacrifice was not well covered in Russian history, mostly forgotten in the shadow of Variag's battle, but in 1960s, thanks to the efforts of many dedicated historians general public was made aware of the battle and of the ship and in 1986 the place of Rurik's sinking was declared a place of remembrance by the Soviet Navy and since then every Russian warship that passes the spot of the battle gives full honors to the sailors who fought and died on the ships of the Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron.

### The Kit

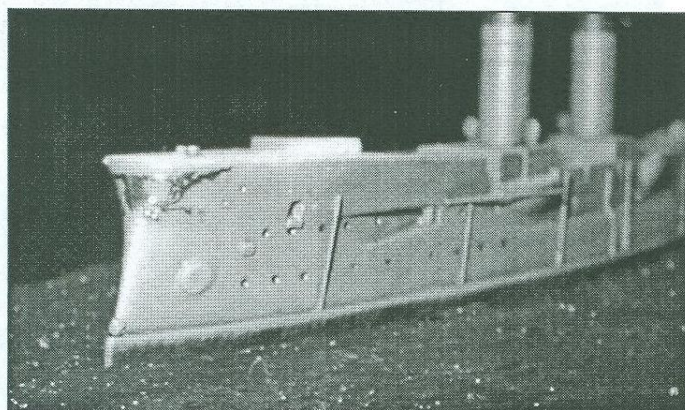
Unfortunately since the kit was built two years ago I do not have the photo of the parts, but you can see them in Norm Koger's excellent review of the kit. The kit consists of approximately 110 nicely molded parts,

which are molded in the usual light tan resin that Kombrig uses. The parts were cast without any air bubbles or flash, so a lot of cleanup will not be needed to start working on the kit. This is somewhat in odds with Norm's review, but can be explained by the fact that about 5-6 years ago Kombrig switched from using brittle gray resin to much better tan one and improved their casting process immensely.

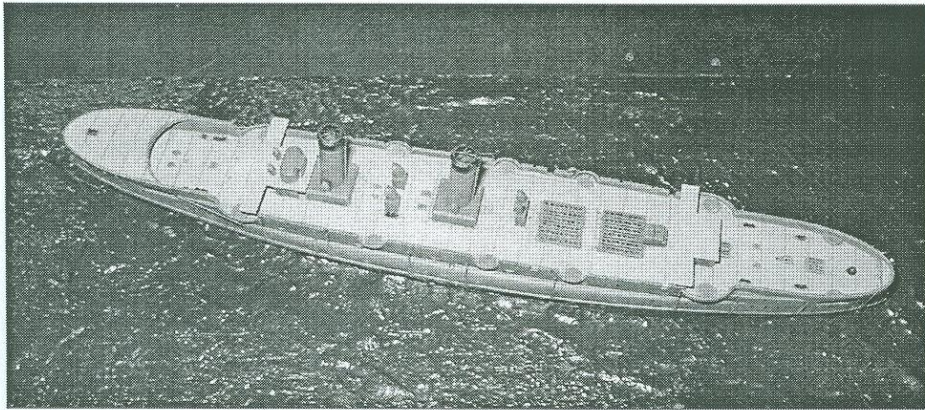
### Construction

#### The Hull

As usual with my models the very first thing that I did was cut off the molded on "Aztek" ladders that some of the older Combrig kits have. Next I fixed up the sides of the hull to remove any imperfections and molded on hatches on the sides of the hull, which were flush with the hull on the real ship. I scribed the hatches to show them in the places shown on the plans. Next I glued the bases for the smoke stacks and the stacks themselves. It is very important to align the stacks because everything else is aligned based on them afterwards. To that order I glued the first stack and aligned the second one based on the first one. After that I used the

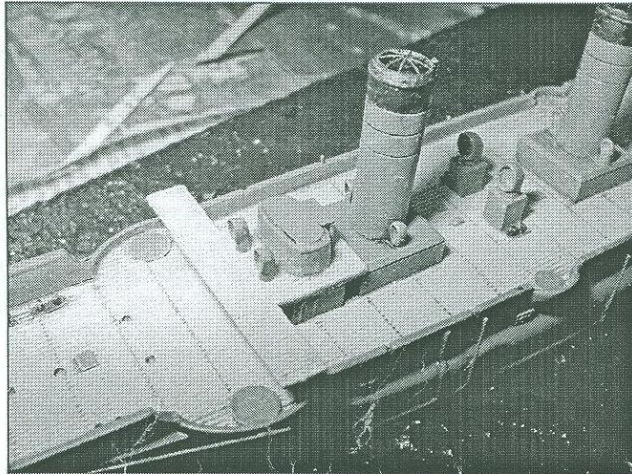


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red automotive putty to cover the seams.

The hull has an interesting shape and is almost like a sailing ship which has a covered forecastle, since that comes as a separate part and the main hull needs to be painted under that deck, so first thing I did was to paint the deck into the tan color, then I masked the deck and painted the hull with PollyS



RLM62 color that I feel best approximates the green color of the Russian ships of the RJW. The other color that is appropriate for the ship in this configuration is overall white with yellow funnels that the ship was painted from its refit in 1901 until October 1903 when it was repainted into a green war camouflage. The only thing I didn't paint was the bow, because after painting the interior of the forecastle I needed to glue the deck of the forecastle and flare it in. Before gluing the forecastle deck I drew the cross deck planking which was prevalent on the Russian ships of the era on the main deck and the forecastle deck. The cross planking was made by drawing it with a pencil, a technique I borrowed from Jim Bauman's build of Rurik. After that I've glued the forecastle onto the hull and flared it in and then painted the forward part of the hull.

Once the hull was finished with painting I added the details to the hull. I've added the torpedo net booms, boat booms and various hatches along the sides of the hull. The funnel caps were also added at this time and flared in so that it is not visible that they came as separate pieces. I've also made the bow crest at this time. Rurik has a very large and well developed bow crest and to make it I've found the photo showing the bow from the sides, scanned it, and using Photoshop removed everything but the actual crest, which gave the half of the crest, which I then flipped and attached to the first part. Then I printed it in gold on a decal film using ALPS printer.

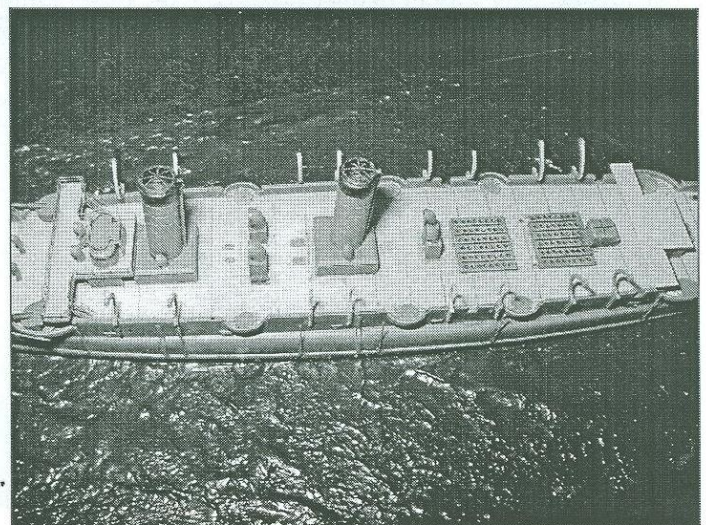
As a final part of the hull construction I've used my usual

process of covering the hull with water soluble stuff that is called Black-It-Out to bring out the details on the hull. Once the stuff was dry, I've wiped off the excess using a Q-tip and then dry-brushed the hull with a lighter green color and the deck with light tan color.

## Details

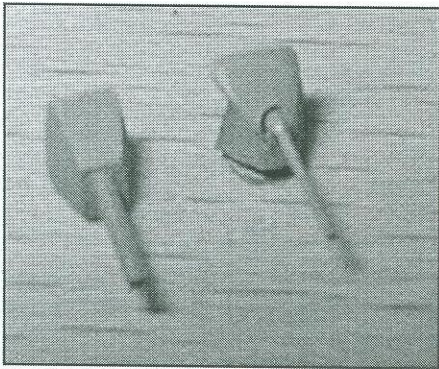
As I usually do on most of my builds, once the basic hull was finished, I started working on the bridges and superstructure. Because the ship was laid out almost as a sailing vessel, there was a minimum superstructure. It had a front bridge with a conning tower and an aft bridge. Since the kit parts had built in splinter shielding on the bridges and there was no planking on them, I decided to scratch build the bridges. I cutoff the conning tower from the forward bridge and junked the rest of the bridge. I made the bridge from a 0.010 plastic sheet using my references. I scored it to make it look like it was made from wooden planking and to make sure that the bridge wings were straight I glued a 0.010 brass rod to prevent the wings from bowing. After that was done I glued the conning tower and the ventilation tubes and glued the completed bridge to the superstructure. The same process was repeated for the aft bridge, where I scratch built the compass platform using the pieces of WEM's Askold PE set. After both bridges were glued I added railings and ladders.

Other details that were added were the anchors and the complex system that held them in place. The anchor chain was made from pieces of photo etch chain from Askold PE set. I cut apart the chain and using individual links I hooked them together to make it look like a real chain. I've also added railings and ladders to the foredeck and ventilators all over the ship.



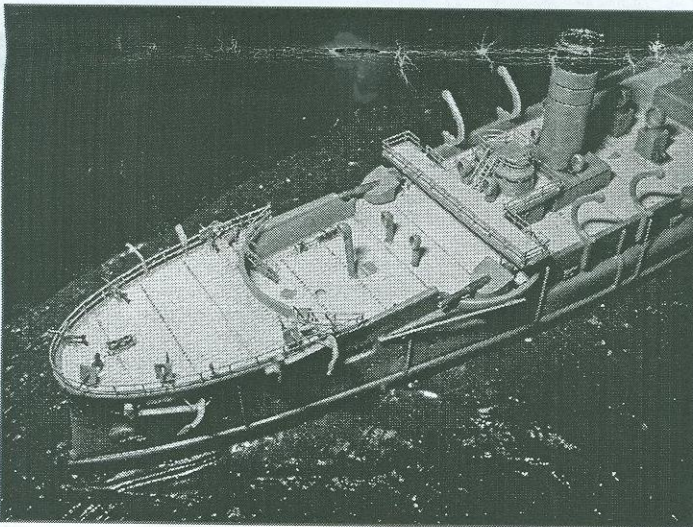
## Armament

The ship was armed with four 8"/35 guns, sixteen 6"/45 and six 120mm/45 Canet guns, six 47mm and ten 37mm Hotchkiss anti-torpedo boat guns. I usually scratch build the guns that have an open gun shield, but because Kombrig's 8" guns are really well cast and because of their design which was almost half-turret like and the back of the shield is not easily visible, I decided to leave them as is. The only thing I did was drill out the gun barrels.



The 6" guns were all situated in the hull casemates so I used the appropriate tubing to create the barrels. The most work in making the armament involved the 120mm guns. The kit had guns that looked nothing like the 120mm guns were supposed to look like, so I decided to scratch

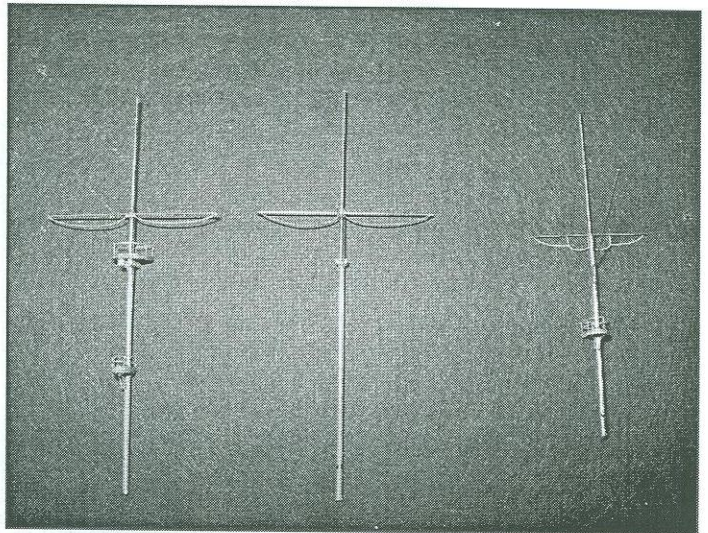
build them. I've made the barrels from hypodermic tubing and the mount from thin plastic. The gun shield was made by making a form and then heat-forming them. The final result has 6 parts and there were 6 guns, so it took a while



to get them built. The Hotchkiss guns all came from the WEM's Askold PE set.

## Boats

The ship has 12 boats but the kit included only 8 boats, so I used two boats and two steam launches from WEM. The ship had eight boats on the complex davits amidships, but the kit provides enough davits for only four of them. To get the other four I went to my parts box and used the davits from an old Gromoboy's kit. The four boats on the stern were on the regular davits that I borrowed from the same Askold PE set that I got the rest of the details from.



## Masts

After the boats were installed the last thing to do was to make masts. I scratch built them using brass rod. Refer to the photos of the time period you are modeling for the exact location of the yardarms and platforms since the configuration changed many times. By the time RJW came around Rurik's bowsprit was removed, as was its sailing rig, which made making the rigging and the masts much easier. After soldering the masts, I've scratch built all of the necessary platforms. The supports below the platforms came with the Askold set - I took the perforated boat skids provided there and cut them in half and glued them upside down below the platforms.

The ship was rigged using pantyhose. Flag came from a Russian decal set.

## Weathering

Once everything was finished I weathered the ship with pastels and dry brushing. The ships of the Vladivostok cruiser squadron were very weathered, which can be seen in the photos of the ships, so I made white streaks of dry salt and rust stains on the hull sides. I dirtied the stacks and the masts with black pastels to simulate coal soot. After everything was finished I sprayed the whole model with Model Master Dull coat to cover all of the glue spots.

## Conclusion

This is a very good kit that builds up into a beautiful model of an interesting ship. There are few very minor flaws that do not distract from the quality of the kit and are easily fixed. The kit was a pleasure to build. I would recommend this kit to anyone interested in the Russian ships or in the ships of the Russo-Japanese war.

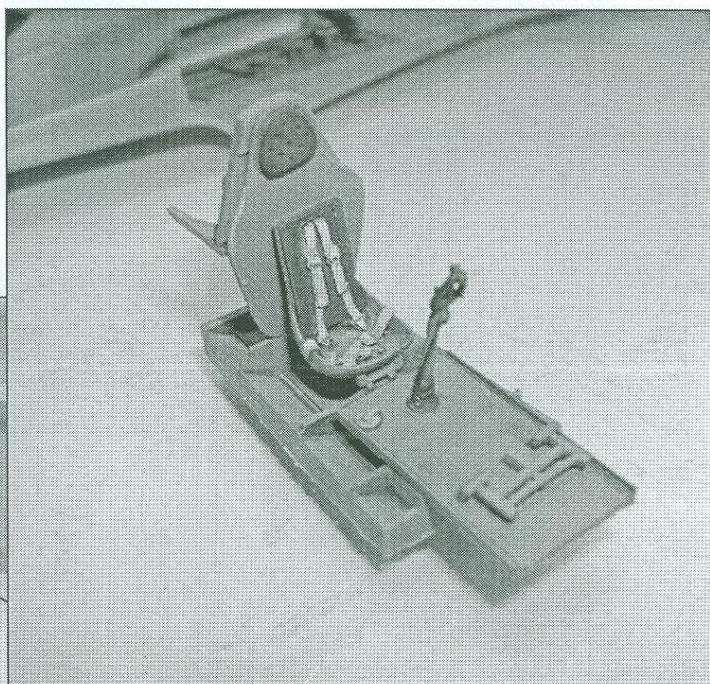
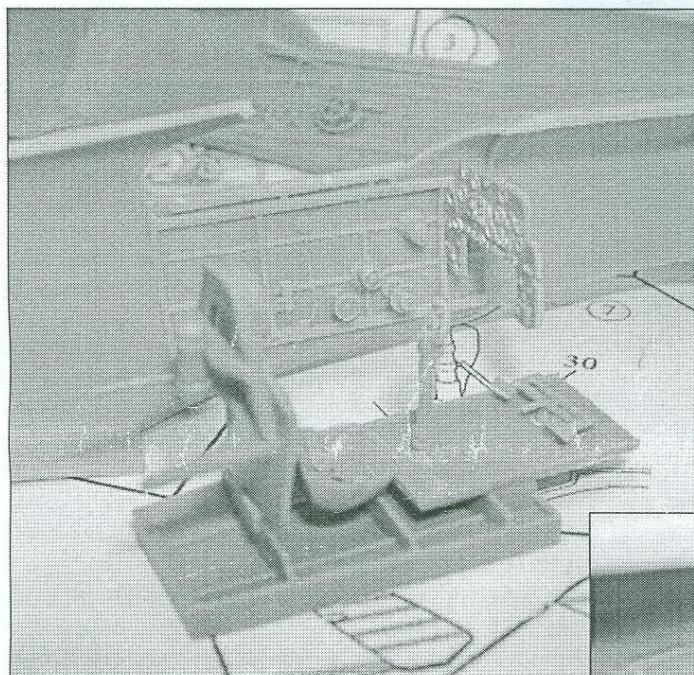
*Vladimir Yakubov has been building models since 1982. His interests include 1:700 scale Russian ships, 1:72 scale Russian armor and aircraft plus all kinds of 1:72 scale 1930's aircraft. He has been a member of SVSM since 1999.*

## Beginning Construction

Construction begins by carefully washing the parts in Dawn dish detergent to remove any mold release agent from the parts. Be careful as some of the parts are only attached by tiny pour gates.

Once that is done, I removed the fuselage pour gates. Take a scribing tool and just scribe along the spine and nose. Once you have it thin enough you can break off the pour gate. Flat sanding just the top with some sand paper and the fuselage is ready to put together. Repeat the process for the other half and the one piece wings. Ensure you retain the airfoil shape of the wing leading edge. This is the only cleanup required. Everything

by Future floor wax flooded on the acetate sheet itself and then positioned properly. Once dry, the back of the sheet was painted white. When dry paint over the white with flat black, as the back will be visible from the top. Details were painted with Apple Barrel hobby paints. An oil wash and light gray dry brush is all it takes to finish up the interior. All easy, all painless, and best of all quick. Except for the

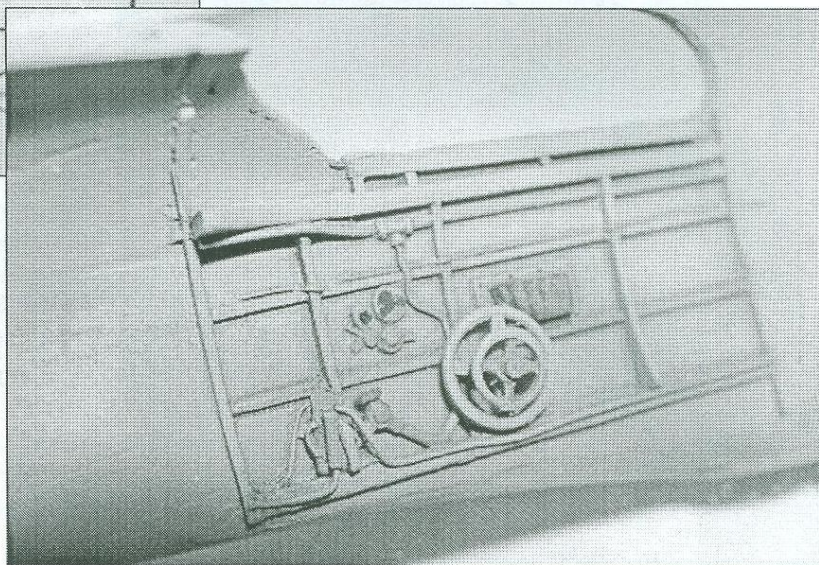


Comparing the unpainted cockpit (left) with the painted one, (top nad bottom) you can apreshiate how a good paint job brings out the life in a model.

else when removed will be ready to use. You may have to touch it with a sanding stick just to clean it up. I had the whole kit ready to assemble in less than a half hour. I can't do that even with a Tamiya or Hasegawa kit. Heck they take me that long just to fill mold marks. The quality of Vector's casting is impeccable and the engineering excellent. I don't know how they do it.

## Cockpit

Now that the fuselage halves are ready, the cockpit is easily assembled by following the instructions. The cockpit is very complete and needs nothing other than throttle handles, which are not provided. I didn't add any keeping the kit OOTB and it still looks great. The seat has the harness molded on and looks great. I assembled everything except the instrument panel and painted the whole interior Model Ensign VVS Wood Aerolak Primer. The instrument panel was painted flat black. The instrument acetate was attached to the back



throttle handles you have to add nothing.

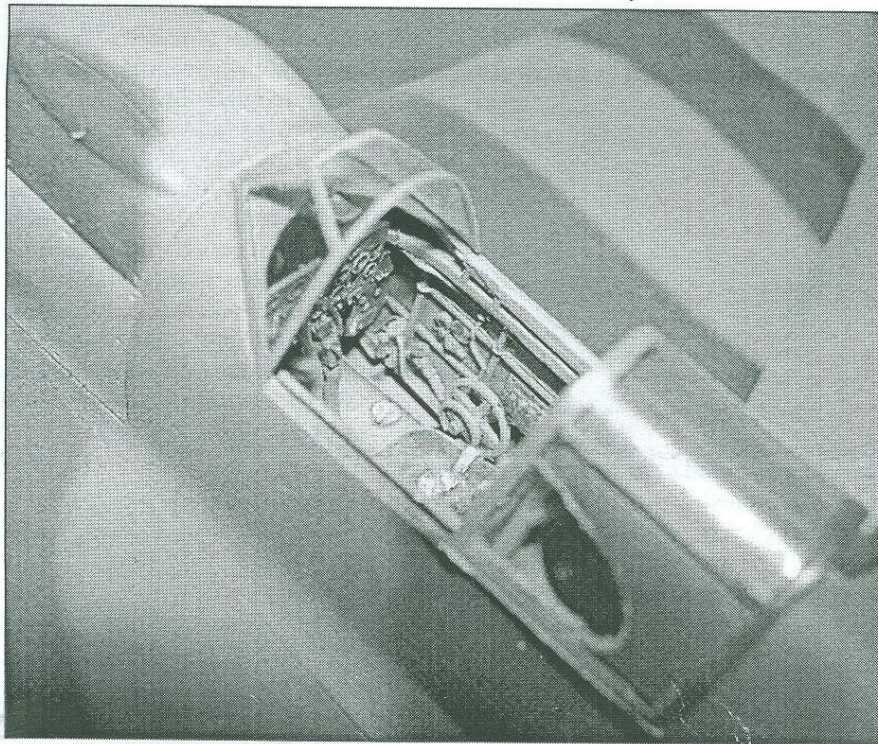
## Fuselage

The fuselage once cleaned up is pretty anti-climactic. You flat sanded the surface so they are ready to go. Make sure you glue the cockpit floor into one half before joining them, as the armor plate behind the cockpit won't fit otherwise, likewise for the instrument panel. I used superglue to join

the halves and fill the seam. Clean up is quick and easy. Being of wood construction there is no seam.

## Wings and tail

The wing is a sold piece affair. Like I said, the early one



The completed cockpit out of box may rival some of thoes costly

had molded in ailerons and the newer ones has separate ones. No big deal either way. You will note that my stick in the cockpit is offset to correspond with the aileron position.

The tail unit is two pieces, left and right. Fit is perfect. Both were attached with super glue and accelerator. Just the slightest filler was needed on the front part of the wings.

## Landing gear

The landing gear fit solidly in the wings. Nothing difficult here. The actuators fit onto the leg perfectly. The whole arrangement is very sturdy and solid. You can assemble the landing gear before painting, as they are the same color as the underside of the airplane.

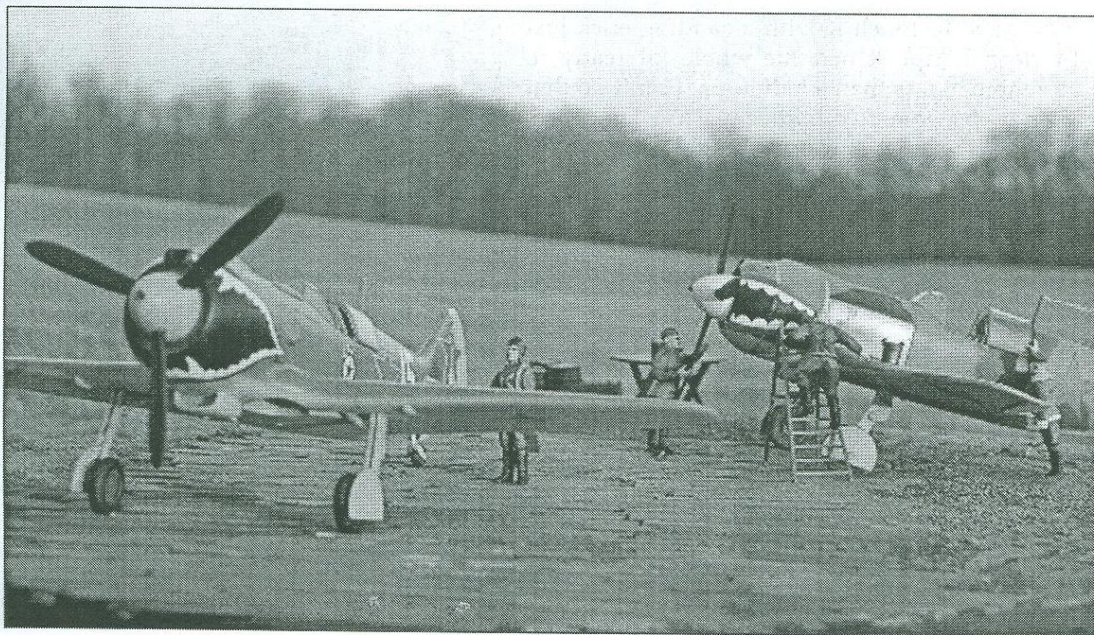
## Painting

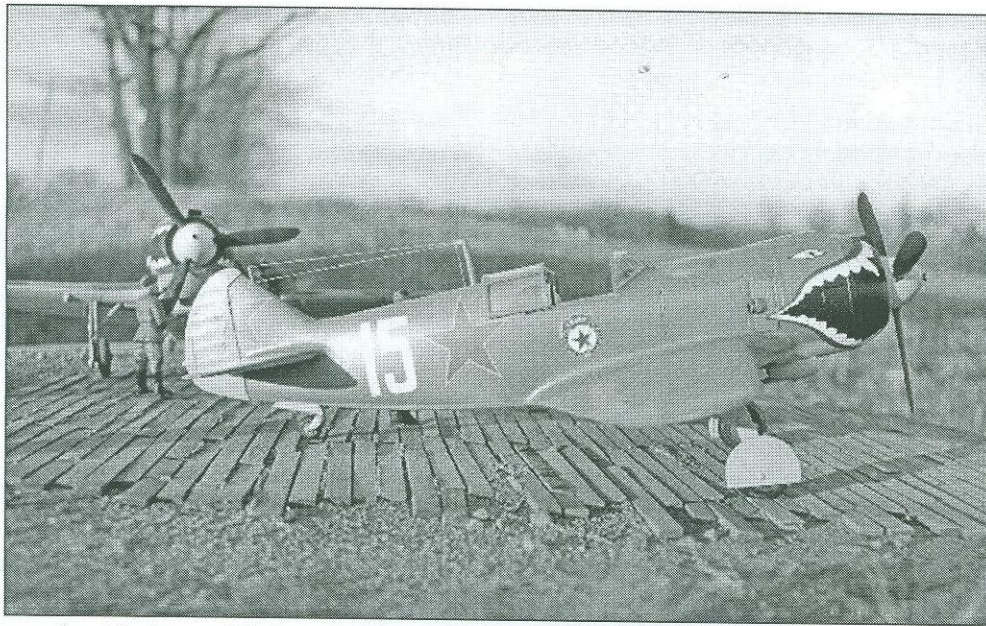
One key thing with a resin kit is to prime the kit with an enamel or lacquer primer before painting. This gives the paint, whether it is

acrylic or enamel, something to stick to. I used Alclad Grey Primer and Microfiller. It works well for me. After fixing up some minor sand marks it was time to paint. There are not many panel lines to preshade so I would have to rely on post shading for my panel variations.

The color of "White 15" is open to discussion but the current school of thought is that it was never flown in combat and only used as a presentation aircraft after the war. After the help of Wes Stachnick and the VVS website (<http://vvs.hobbyvista.com/>) we determined that the color of "White 15" with its large bass mouth, too ugly to be called a shark mouth was painted in AMT-12 a dark gray. I opted for the Gunze color for this. I added a little white to the color and painted the flight control surfaces this color to break up the bland gray color. I know the controls and the wings were fabric cover wood but call it artistic license. The lower color was from the old Aeromaster line and approximated AMT-7. It is a little pale but looked good to me. "White 15" did not have the aluminum panel behind the exhaust typical of the other La-5s. Yellow was added to the tail and the spinner. Don't forget to cut masks for the mouth pattern on the decals. I painted the area semi-gloss black.

The other aircraft would be similar in appearance in that it has an ugly bass mouth, but this one was used operationally and is more typical of a La-5. Before painting the camouflage I painted the heat panel behind the exhausts with Alclad Aluminum. After masking this off with Tamiya tape I painted the underside AMT-7. The topside is typical of most La-5 in having AMT-4 green and AMT-6 black. The black is very easy I used Gunze Tire Black as I thought flat black to be too, well black. The AMT-4 is almost a direct





match with Gunze US Interior Green so that is what I used. The colors were freehanded for a loose pattern. A coat of gloss and it was off to the decals.

## Decals

What can I say I'm a sucker for a large mouth bass, okay so they are technically shark mouths. I utilized the Aeromaster sheet for "White 15". The shark mouth would make or break the kit so I put it on first. No problem everything fit like it was designed. I used Solvaset to make sure everything settled down nicely. The rest of the decals were cobbled together from various Aeromaster sheets. This particular airplane had peculiar stars with yellow surrounds on them. Unique looking to say the least.

I decided to use the La-5 bonus sheet that comes with the La-5F kit. The small mouth bass decal was not a problem. I used the kit decals for the wings and fuselage. They all reacted well with the setting solution but when I overcoated the decals with the gloss coat they crinkled. All of them, except the bass mouth. Thank God. How that happened I don't know, but I'm grateful. I peeled the Vector decals off with tape. A light sanding with Micromesh reapply some gloss and it was time to apply some Aeromaster decals. The issue with the decals is the only weak spot of the kit.

Over coated with gloss and then a semi-gloss clear (Grey one) and flat (camouflaged one) made the airplanes ready for weathering.

## Weathering

Weathering was kept to a

minimum, as the wood surface seems to hold their color pretty well. Besides "White 15" was a display bird anyhow. The other one would have been relatively new and the Luftwaffe shot them down with alarming numbers. Just some burnt umber in the panel lines and some Alclad burnt Sepia exhaust streaks, along with some Mig Pigment mud for the wheels and the weathering was done. If you haven't tried this weathering medium they work really well. Paint them where you want them and then apply some water to set things up. Or ally water and then the dust and you have some mud. Very versatile.

## Final touches

Adding the front part of the canopy was a non issue, if you were careful when you cut them out the fit is very good. A little white glue and it faired in perfectly. The sliding portion was tacked down with just little bit of superglue to hold it on the tracks. I did have to fashion replacement rear windows from acetate because I screwed up the ones in the kit. I got carried away with the sanding stick. They were all attached with white glue. Adding the wheels and the antenna masts are the final steps. Put the custom built antenna on the spine and tail is relatively easy. No big problem. Time to sit back and enjoy my first two VVS machines in all their big mouth bass glory.

## Conclusion

Some people may complain about the cost of the kit, but think about it this way, an injection kit of this quality will cost at least \$40. Now you know you have to have



an Eduard photo etch set, which you will only use some of anyhow, \$15. You like the look of the photo etch seatbelts too, \$10. We all know that a resin cockpit set would set it off too, \$20. Of course you'll want to have resin wheels, \$5. Don't forget the vacuform canopy, better buy two, as you will need them both, \$10. You are now over \$90 already. You typically spend the cost on a kit, just not all at once. Now take into account the excellent fit and engineering of this kit and you have a winner.

I cannot say enough good things about this kit. The fit is fabulous, the cleanup is easier than most injection molded kits, the subject is fresh and exciting and to top it off the engineering makes this a quick build. I absolutely loved it. The only bad thing is the decals and that may have been me. Obviously I liked it enough to do two kits. It is easy to build and looks great right out of the box. Do yourself a favor and try this kit. You won't be sorry. If you have never built an all resin kit this is an excellent place to start. If you have you will be surprised at how easy this one is.

Now it is on to the La-5F, La-5FN and the new Lagg-3s. When will this madness end? It is a very good time to build VVS fighter airplanes. We now finally have accurate kits of these historically significant airplanes. Why did it take so long? Come on decal manufacturers and make us real happy.

Without a doubt this is one of the finest resin kits that has ever been kitted. Marvelous work Vector.

## References

Model Stock Number: BBVRK-48-001 Cost: \$90.00

Highly recommended.

Thanks to Buffies Best for the review kit and it can be purchased directly from Buffies Best at <http://www.buffiesbest.com>. Or by contacting them at:

8716 East Frontier Place  
Denver, Colorado 80237  
720-200-9122

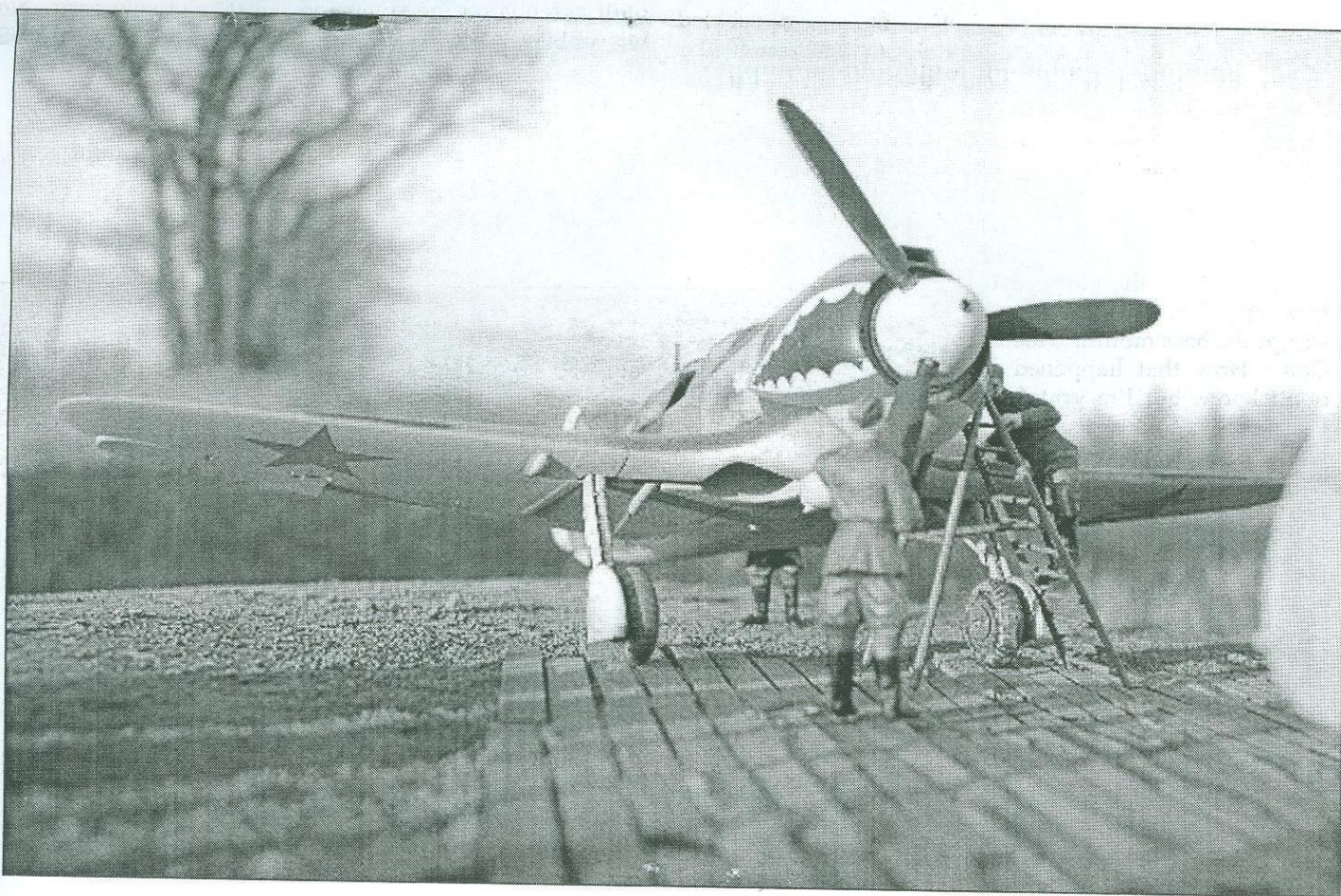
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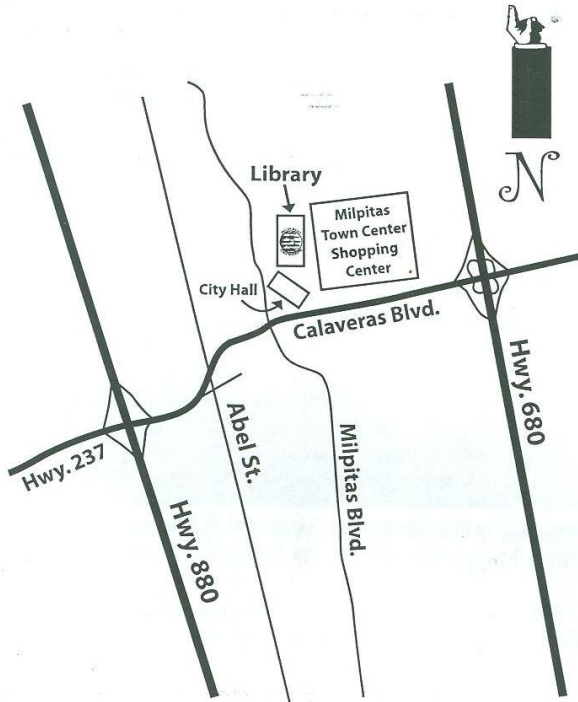
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**February 16**  
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