

Turning *Italeri's* B-25B into a Doolittle Raider

By Randy Ray

I counted myself lucky to be one of the guys picked to build a 1:72 scale B-25 for the Doolittle Raid exhibit that Bill Ferrante organized. I've wanted to do a B-25 of any mark since seeing a restored one take flight at the Chino Airport at the last IPMS show they had there. Bill gave me my *Italeri* B-25 kit at the holiday gift party in December, and gave me the decals for aircraft #10 (tailcode 02250) at the January meeting.

The *Italeri* kit is one of their older issues, and while accurate in most areas, it is a challenging build. Making a Doolittle B-25 takes even more work. Here are some of the "gotchas" I ran into while building this kit. These tips are based on the B-25 B/C boxing of the kit, which offers markings for a Doolittle Raider and an RAF aircraft used in Operation Market Garden over Holland.

1. Gather your references

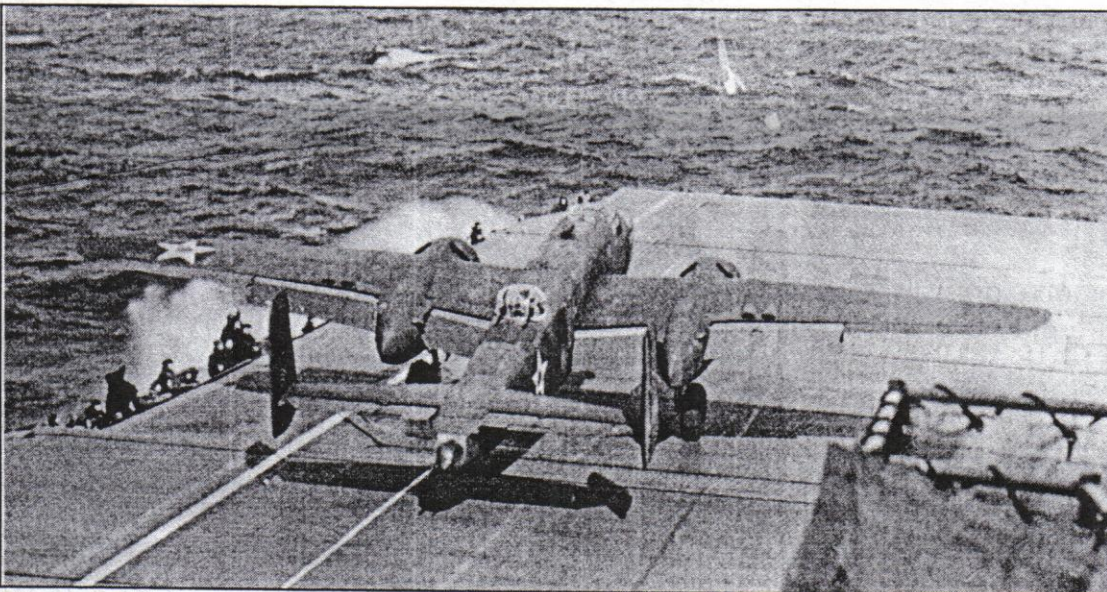
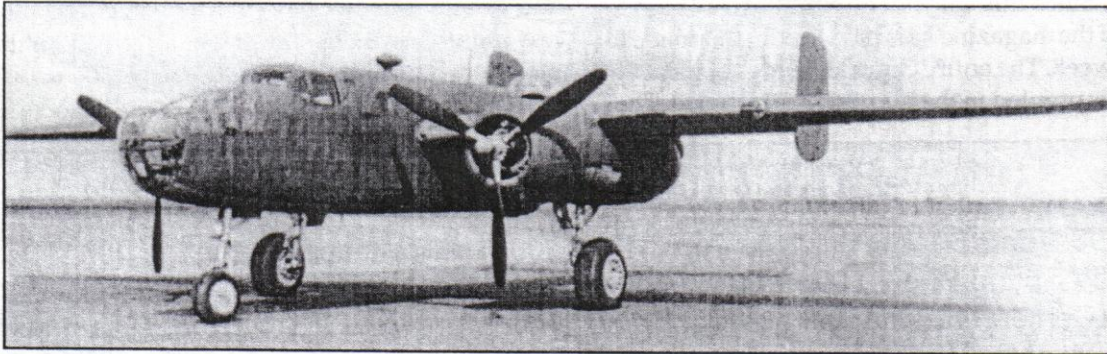
This kit is not quite on the mark for a Doolittle B-25B, so you will need a few good references handy. I used the *Detail & Scale* volume on the B-25, by Bert Kinzey. I also used an

Accurate Miniatures B-25 kit as reference, given the massive amount of research they did for that kit.

2. Glass areas and windows

The instructions have several notes for the two versions, referring to them as "A" and "B." But they don't really identify

the RAF bird as "A"—they leave it to you to figure that out from the order they appear in for the painting guides. For the Doolittle ("B") version, you will have to cut out some extra windows just over the trailing edge of each wing (one per side) and use a different glass piece for the window just aft of the main cockpit. But the cockpit glass itself isn't quite right for an



At top, a B-25B shows off its classic lines; at bottom, one of Doolittle's Raiders gets airborne from the U.S.S. Hornet for the raid on Tokyo. Only 120 B-25Bs were built.

early *Mitchell*. Looking at the D&S book, there is a B-25B on the front cover, and it is clear that the pilot's (left-hand) side of the glass isn't right. This piece is correct for the later *Mitchells*, not the early ones. At the start of the curve, there is a glass pane that is only half glass, with a large structural section below it. And the curved area for the left-hand side is divided vertically by a structural line. Meanwhile, the co-pilot's side is one

Continued on page 12

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

EDITOR'S BRIEF

The calendar is getting awfully full, as you can see below. Several members are going to the Seattle show, including new president Mike Burton; old president Greg Plummer will pull an Alexander Haig and be in charge of this month's meeting.

The B-25 project has come to a close, and I know that Bill Ferrante would like to extend a thank-you to the many volunteers who worked on the model planes and ships that will no doubt result in a spectacular display. Hopefully, we can get some images of the final product for a future newsletter.

Speaking of newsletters... The editor received all of the content in this issue with less than a week to go until deadline, resulting in a rather rushed process of editing and laying out of the magazine. Since this coincided with the deadlines for the production of the magazine he is paid to edit, this made for a rather painful week. The entire club has an idea of what you are building—it is printed in the minutes in each issue. Thus,

we'd like to think you might take the time to write every now and a again. The newsletter is supported by a minority of our membership—Bob Miller, Mike Burton, Gabriel Lee, Mark Schynert, Greg Plummer, Mike Meek, Robin Powell, Vladimir Yakubov, Laramie Wright and the McClure bothers, primarily. If we had one article a year from each of the rest of the members, we could actually get ahead for once and allow the editor to build up a couple of issues ahead of time. This, in turn, would allow him to actually build some models, which in turn would lead to more articles for the newsletter. Please consider this—your participation would go a long way to sustaining both the newsletter and the editor's enthusiasm for publishing it. Again, thanks go to Randy, Vladimir, Greg, Bob and Robin, because they narrowly averted a Styrene Sheetless month for the rest of the club. It is time the rest of the members returned the favor to them.

—The Editor

CONTEST CALENDAR

April 19, 2003: **IPMS/Seattle** hosts **ReCon 7**, the IPMS Seattle Spring Show 2003 at the Renton Community Center, 1715 Maple Valley Highway, Renton, Washington. For more information, call Jon Fincher at (206) 439-0565 or visit the website at www.ipms-seattle.org.

May 10, 2003: **IPMS/Santa Rosa** hosts its **2003 Model Expo** at the Sebastopol Veterans Memorial Building, 282 S. High Street, Sebastopol, California. This year's theme: "Fabulous Failures." For more information, call Greg Reynolds (707) 829-6304 or e-mail him at grljj@mindspring.com or chick the club website at www.ipmssantarosa.org.

May 30 and 31, 2003: **IPMS/Las Vegas** hosts its **annual contest** at the Imperial Palace Hotel and Casino, 3535 Las Vegas Blvd. South, Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information, call Jim Mitchell at (702) 254-6386.

May 31: 2003 **IPMS/Washington Alexander Pearson Modeleers** host their **Invitational Model Show and Contest** at the Jack Murdock Aviation Center at the Pearson Air Museum, 1115 E 5th, Vancouver, Washington. This year's theme: The 100th Anniversary of Flight: the First 20 Years (1903-1923). For more informaton, call Pascal Valadier at (503) 282-9371 or visit the website at www.angelfire.com/wa3/ipmsspearsonmodeleers/

2003%20invitational%20page.htm.

June 21, 2003: **IPMS/Ontario** (formerly IPMS/Chino) plans to hold a contest. More details as they become available.

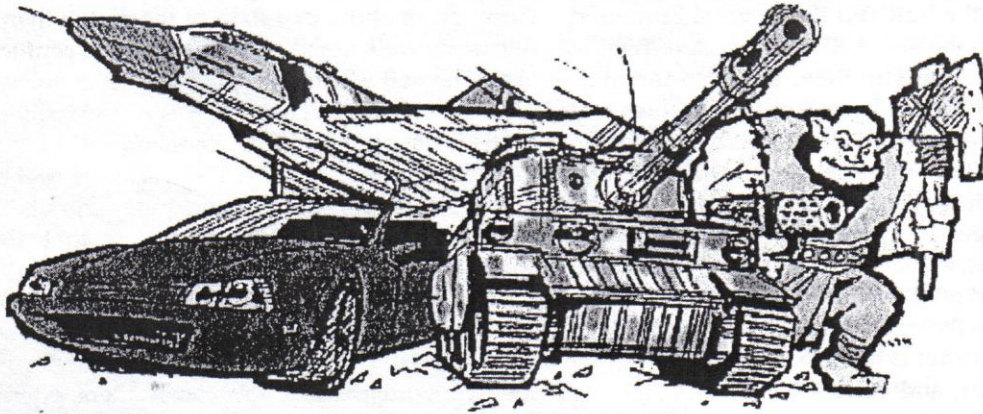
August 10: **IPMS/Central Valley Scale Modelers** host their **15th Anual Scale Model Show and Contest** at the Holland Elementary School in Fresno, California. This year's theme is "WWII European Theatre of Operations, 1939-1945." For more information, call Nick Bruno at (559) 229-3675 or Jim Cavin at (559) 584-5796.

August 16, 2003: **IPMS/Mt Diablo** hosts its **Plastic Model Contest** at the Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum, 734 Marin St. in Vallejo. For more information, e-mail John Clements at sjshark2@ix.netcom.com.

Feb. 22, 2004: **Silicon Valley Scale Modelers** host the eleventh annual **Kickoff Classic** at Napredak Hall, 770 Montague Expressway, San Jose. The theme is "Stars and Stripes." For more information, call Chris Bucholtz at (408) 723-3995.

April 24, 2004: **IPMS/Fresno Scale Modelers** host the **Region 9 Convention and Contest**, to be held at the Fresno Air National Guard station or, in the event of national defense conflicts, at an alternate site. More details to be announced.

IPMS Santa Rosa's SCALE MODEL EXPO 2003



Saturday, May 10, 2003

An exposition featuring:

Award winning models, raffle, displays of military vehicles and militaria.

"Make and Take" for children and a Speed Model Building Competition for adult modelers.

Vendor sales of models kits, decals, and books.

You are invited to bring all the models you want to show off (no fees for displayed models) or participate in...

...an IPMS model contest.

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Sebastopol Veterans Memorial Building
282 S High St, Sebastopol, CA

**\$2 Adult Admission -or-
\$5 First Contest Entry + \$1 each additional model**

**\$1 Junior Admission (16 and under) -or-
\$2 First Contest Entry + \$1 each additional model**

There will be First, Second and Third place awards in 39 categories.

Trophies for Best of Show, Best Junior and People's Choice, Best Civilian Aircraft, "Sow's Ear" (the best model from the worst kit) and a cash prize for Speed Model Building.

And finally, a trophy for our contest theme, "Fabulous Failures", models of either historical subjects like the Hindenberg, Titanic, Edsel and Spruce Goose, that never quite lived up to expectations, or fantasy flops of your own imagination.

For more Vendor, Sponsor and general information, go to:

www.ipmssantarosa.org and click on "Model Expo 2003",
or contact: Greg Reynolds, Expo Chairman, (707) 829-6304, grljj@mindspring.com

Trumpeter scores a hit with their Challenger 2

By Robin Powell

At a combat weight of around 75 tons, the Challenger 2 is the heaviest tank in use today. It is also the most heavily armoured, carrying the new Dorchester type of Chobham armour both as part of the hull and the internal armoured charge bins. Armed with the new L30 high pressure 120mm rifled gun firing Charm 3 ammunition, it is also the most heavily armed tank ever fielded by any nation. So how is it that nobody seems to have heard of it? Probably because someone decided rather than give this all-new tank a new name, they would call it the Challenger 2, so as to ensure confusion with Challenger 1 Mark 2, Challenger CRARRV, Challenger This-and-that...

The hull shape is based on that of the Challenger 1, but the suspension is new and the road wheels have a peculiar asymmetric layout. The turret is huge, has large, flush stowage bins around the rear, and carries the duplex sighting systems needed for hunter-killer operation. The tank uses the French sights developed from those used on the LeClerc MBT, and the fire control system is an updated version of the Canadian system used on the M1A1.

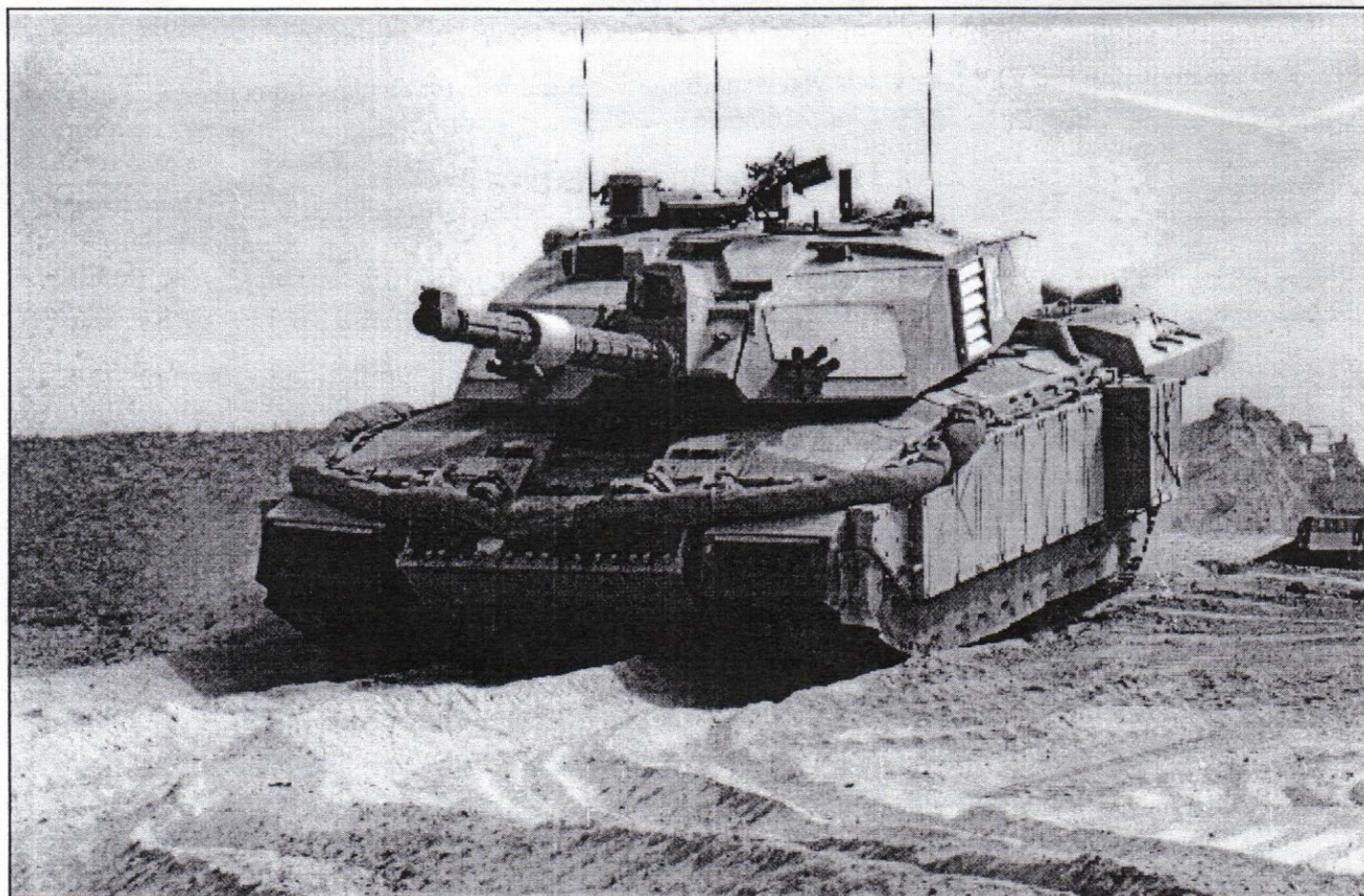
Until now the way to model a Challenger 2 was to buy either the *Accurate Armour* resin kit or the *Cromwell* resin kit. Both of these are lovely kits but the high resin content is seriously damaging to your wallet. However, *Trumpeter* has just decided that rather than invest in lengthy research into original

subjects, they could just copy *Accurate Armour* kits and turn them into injection moulded items. Bad for *Accurate Armour*, good for modeller bank balances.

The *Trumpeter* Challenger 2 sells for around 25 notes of local currency, or about one sixth of the cost of their pattern. The release is well timed with the current conflict, where 120 examples of the Real Thing are now in action. By all accounts, pitting T-72s against these beasts is decidedly unwise.

The kit is pretty amazing, containing 414 parts very crisply moulded in green styrene. The tracks are rubber-band style, but are still sharply defined and quite accurate. The Hydrogas suspension units are all moulded as separate four-part items and the road wheel assemblies are all retained by internally fixed polythene rings, just like *Tamiya* provide. The hull parts all fit well with the only seams needing work being the ones you can't see. The rear hull gets dozens of tiny parts attached for the towing fixtures, jerry can holders, external fuel drum holders and DON 10 telephone cable reel. The engine deck has separate hinges for the engine covers and separate lifting handles that are just as fine as the wire I normally use for these items. The grilles over the cooling vents are so fine they look just like brass etchings once painted.

There are problems, however. Many of the mid- to small-size parts are spoiled by ejector pin marks that need filling and sanding. Items like the headlamp mounting bracket are so small that handling them once is fraught. Holding it while



Challenger 2 tanks are seeing their first full-scale combat in Iraq. Here, a Challenger 2 plows through a shallow berm during desert training.



A Challenger 2 rolls past various British support vehicles during exercises. The Challenger 2 differs from the Challenger 1 in its newer fire control system and reduced weight.

filling pin marks, sanding the filler and then fitting it guarantee many hours spent on one's knees praying to the modellers' deity for the gift of 10x vision and Small Part Awareness.

The turret is ambitiously tooled to allow for the huge stowage bins on the rear turret sides to be posed swung away from the turret core for access to the hatches behind. It also means that care is needed to get the bins to all sit flush and level if you want to pose them normally. The turret mounting ring is moulded a little thin, resulting in a fit that is not as solid as a *Tamiya* kit, but how often do you remove and re-fit the turret? About three times a night while you are building it, if you are like me.

The main gun is made up of six parts. Six. Want a gun to shoot round corners? Then assemble this one late at night. Actually, there is good reason to tool it this way, as there are several features that would need to be simplified to mould it in fewer parts. At least the gun parts all fit well, especially over the lengthwise join along the recoil cover. It is surprising that the new L30 gun is actually shorter than the L11 120mm gun that was fitted to the Challenger 1 and Chieftain, despite a 50 percent increase in muzzle velocity.

Two different secondary cupolas are supplied. The first 53 vehicles had a more elaborate mounting for the 7.62mm GPMG and the kit includes this as well as the simpler, main-production version. Optional thermal exhaust cowls are also included.

The Challenger 2 tanks in action have all received up-armour kits for the operation against Iraq. The bow armour is based on the Challenger 1 kit and as I have spare parts from a *Tamiya* kit that gave up its lower hull for my Challenger CRARRV recovery vehicle conversion, I thought I would try it for fit. It fits just fine. I had to make new mounting points

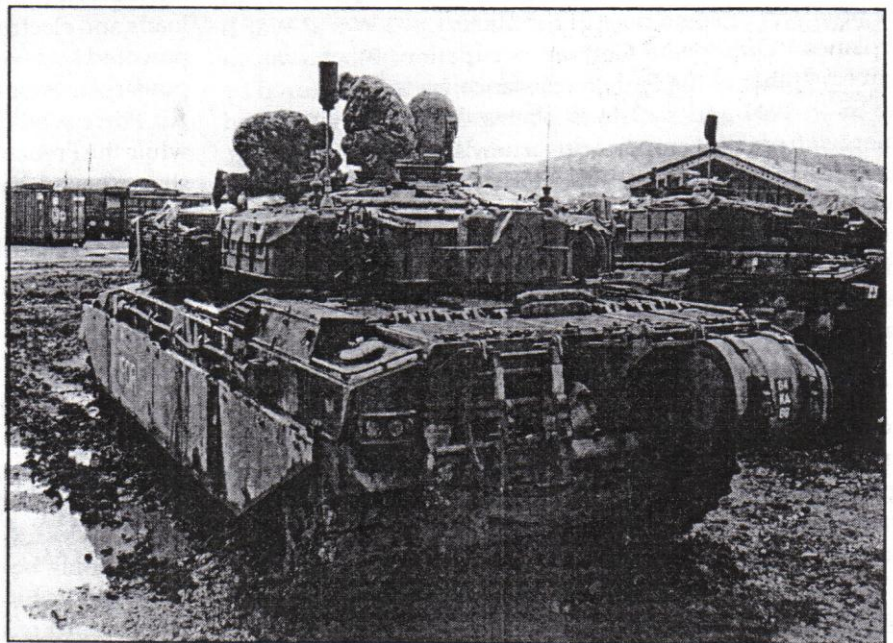
for the headlamps as on the Challenger 2 these fit atop the spaced upper bow plate, but otherwise it is plug-and-play. The central portion of the armoured skirt plates can also be used, but the items on the Challenger 2 have an extra plate of Chobham armour added to the forward section, and much shorter rear steel plates, cut away around the sprockets. I made the changes up using styrene sheet, *Grandt Line* bolts and wire.

There are also new dust guards fitted to the bow plate next to the tracks and flexible dust curtains hung from the side skirts right down to the tracks. This means that the road wheels will be completely hidden on a model finished this way. This may not be all bad as the kit road wheels are dubious in terms of accuracy, at least as far as *Accurate Armour* are concerned, who have already released a set of replacement resin wheels for the kit. I am using thin aluminium

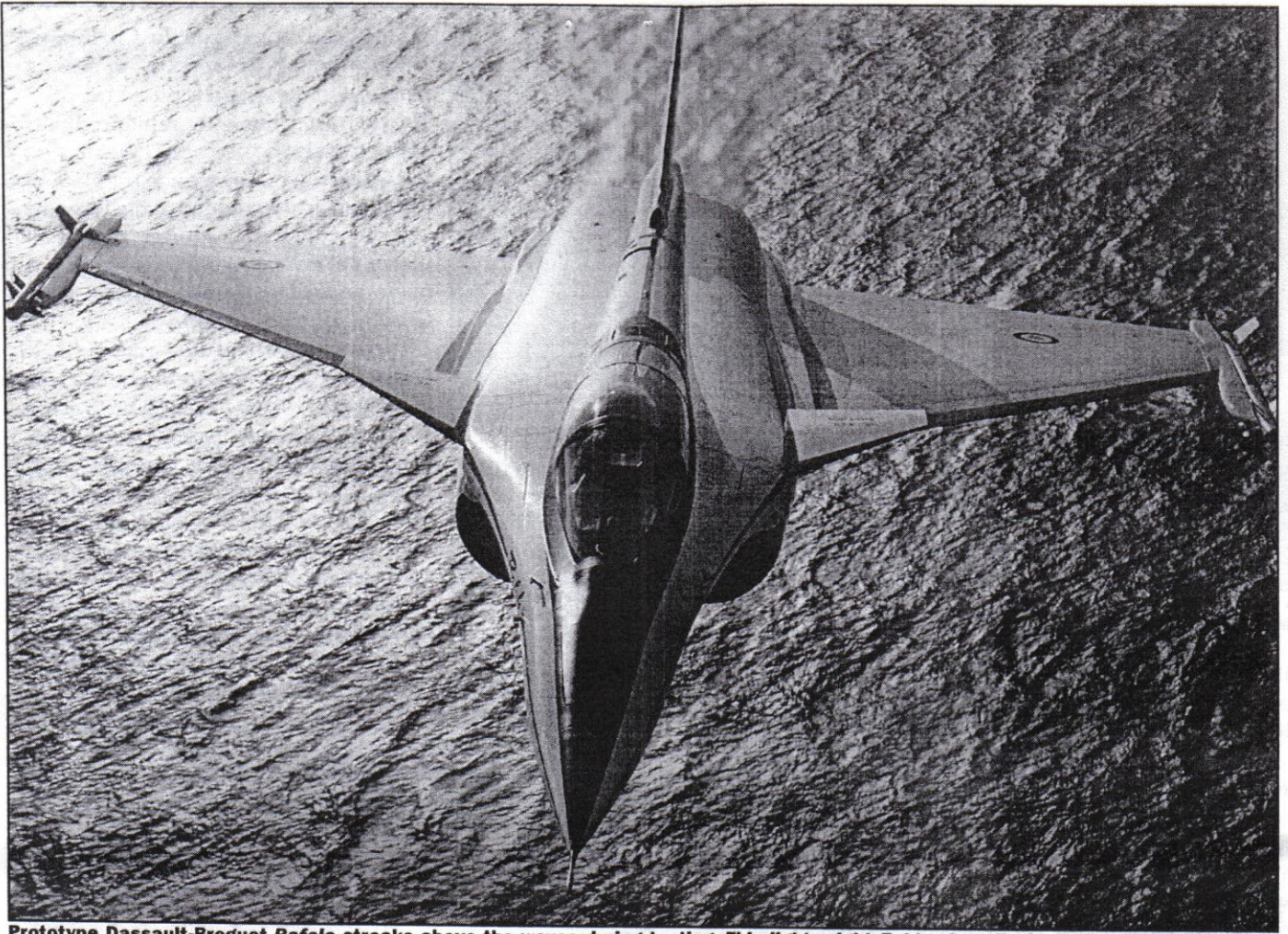
sheet to represent the flexible dust curtains. Other parts that need making up are the large ID panels fitted to the front, back and sides of the turret.

This kit has the largest decal sheet I have ever seen in an AFV kit. It offers markings for several IFOR, Bosnia and UK based vehicles. I don't yet know how good they are, but they look fine on the sheet. I normally use *Xtracolor* paint on my UK desert scheme armour, but as I have taken lately to using oil paint and enamel thinner washes I thought I would mix up a *Tamiya* version. This is hard to get right but after a lot of experimentation I found a mix of Dark Yellow, Sky, White and a spot of red that looks the part. When I have the definitive recipe written down I'll tell the club.

I am generally impressed with the kit and am having a great time finishing it.



The Challenger 2 first saw action as a part of the IFOR forces in Bosnia.



Prototype Dassault-Breguet Rafale streaks above the waves during testing. This lightweight fighter has displaced the Mirage series as France's most modern air combatant.

Pint-sized fighter: Revell's 1:144 Rafale

By Greg Plummer

Marcel Bloch was one of the very first French aeronautical engineers; he may be remembered by us model builders as the producer of some not-very-attractive pre-World War II airplanes. During the German occupation, Bloch was an active member of the French resistance; he was captured by the SS in 1944 and sent to Buchenwald. He survived and emerged from the camp bearing a new surname of Dassault, his code name during the occupation. Perhaps to atone for his clunky bombers of the 1930s, Dassault's new firm would go on to make the sleek and successful *Mirage* series of delta winged jets. Today, Dassault is helmed by Marcel's son Serge, while the firm is majority owned by the state. The *Rafale* series of jet fighters are its latest product and the subject of this modeling article.

The *Rafale* is closely related to and parallels the development of the *Eurofighter/Typhoon*—the two craft even look quite similar to each other. Both efforts were made to replace aging *Jaguars* and F-4 fighter/bombers in European service. France essentially broke away early from the *Eurofighter* morass and developed the *Rafale* A on its own; it succeeded in bringing the *Rafale* into service while the *Typhoon* project lagged behind.

Like the *Eurofighter/Typhoon*, the *Rafale* has twin engines, a delta-like wing with canards, and a single vertical tail. Designed as a multi-role aircraft, it can carry a wide variety of loads and electronics. When it first flew in 1986, the *Rafale* was powered by a pair of GE F404 engines. Later, native SNECMA powerplants would be used. Production models for the French Air Force would be the twin seat *Rafale* B and single seat C, while the French Navy would get the *Rafale* M, a C model with strengthened landing gear and a few other minor changes. Eventually, the upgraded *Rafale* D became the French Air Force's standard, while a twin seat naval version is being developed to supplement the M. In the past few years, France has offered *Rafales* for export but no buyers have taken them so far, not even Iraq. Performance of the *Rafale* is what is expected of a modern jet—it can carry a good amount of ordnance and deliver it accurately. It also has a cannon just in case an old-fashioned dog fight comes up.

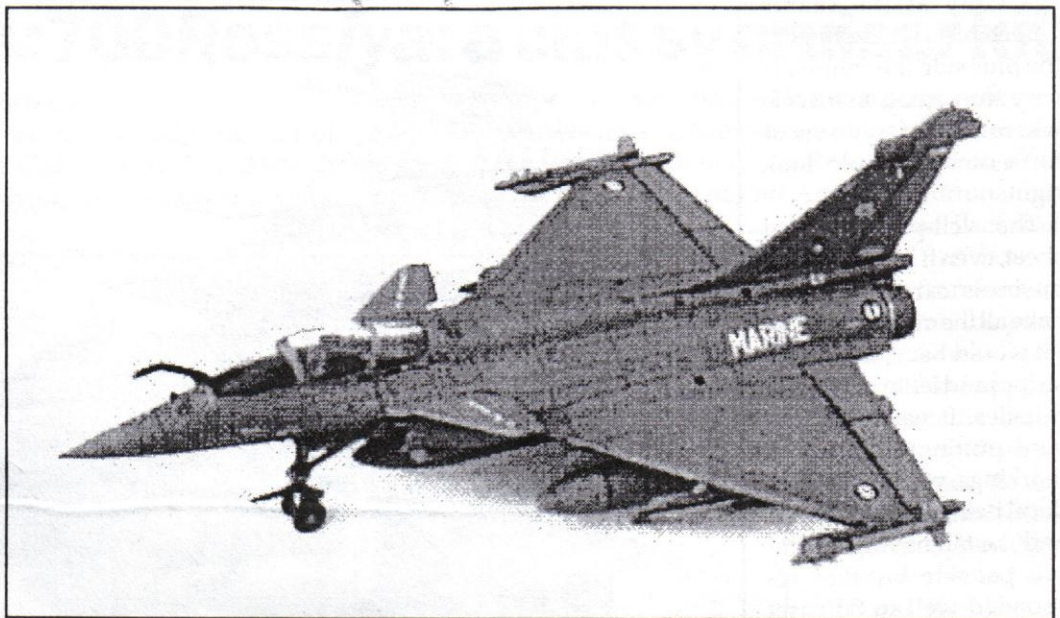
Revell of Germany has been producing some great 1:144 aircraft kits lately, including a very nice *Hunter* and most recently a MiG 1.44. Their *Rafale* M is no exception. The small end-opening box comes with two sprues of roughly 50 gray parts that feature crisp engraved detail, a tiny clear canopy, and a small but very complete sheet of decals. A full set of drop

tanks and missiles are included, which is nice but should also be expected in this scale as the missiles are only 3/4 of an inch long. They can spare that amount of plastic, I think.

Construction starts with the cockpit, as with most aircraft models. The kit provides a separate ejection seat an instrument panel in addition to the basic tub. All the parts were painted in a dark gray with light gray seat cushions. The nice thing about 1:144 is that one need not worry about adding things like photoetched seatbelts, as they would be nearly microscopic in this scale. If you are really worried about such things, then you may need

a hobby (besides this one). The cockpit was then installed into the upper front fuselage half, along with a couple of BB pellets to prevent tail sitting. The canards are molded as one piece with a thin bar between them so that they would move together when the model is finished. The bar is trapped between the top and bottom fuselage halves; I elected to just cut the bar and glue in the canards later as I knew I would break one off during assembly anyway.

The fuselage halves fit well together and I used just a little putty on the front section. Fit has to be good in this scale; there's quite a difference between a little gap on a large model and a little gap on a little model. Fortunately, the top spine piece and the vertical tail part fit well with just a bit of liquid cement. A little sanding and massaging was required for the air intakes, though; each one is molded in two parts. There was no guide in the instructions for the wing anhedral, so I had to rely on how the one-piece wings fit into the fuselage to get the (hopefully) proper angle. I simply made sure they were equal side to side.



Greg's finished model. The detail in the Revell kit goes a long way to disguise the fact that it's 1:144!

The canards with their new peg and hole arrangement went in without a problem. I did not glue them, so they also retained their free movement, albeit independently. The nose cone was then glued on and sanded to smooth the seam.

At this time I assembled the three drop tanks and glued on the missile rails and drop tank holders as they would be the same color as the airframe. Also, the landing gear minus wheels and the tiny landing gear doors were installed.

With the main airframe done I was ready for painting. First, I applied a wash of black to highlight (lowlight?) the engraved detail. The radome and the tail mounted sensors were also painted white as part of the pre-shading. With the cockpit masked off, the model was airbrushed using a mix of 30 percent RAF Sea Gray, 30 percent Testors high gloss clear, and 40 percent thinner. The large amount of gloss in the mix made the paint translucent, allowing the black panel lines to just barely show through, which is appropriate for this scale. The white sections showed as a slightly lighter shade of gray also. As a bonus, the semigloss surface is easier for decal application.



Head-on, the Rafale is an imposing-looking fighter. Note the detail in the landing gear.

I should mention here that it seems very difficult to get the exact color matches for the Rafale M. Information on modern French colors was hard to come by in my Internet searches, and I wasn't about to buy a book on the subject that would cost more than the model three times over even if that book existed. In photos, the plane can appear to be anything from a medium blue gray to a pale gray without a hint of blue in it depending on lighting conditions. I'm also not sure if the undersides are lighter in color; the Revell instructions simply show an overall gray. I chose RAF sea gray because I had a bottle of it in front of me. I like easy decisions.

The canopy frames were masked off and painted with pure Sea Gray, and then the canopy was white-glued onto the fuselage. The fit here wasn't that great, but brushing on

Sea Gray at the seams helped blend it in a bit. On the plus side the canopy is very thin, good in a scale where usually only a vacuum canopy would look right.

The well-printed decal sheet, even if it is the size of business card, seems to have all the markings a 1:48 kit would have, including stripes and lettering for the missiles. It was truly absurd putting on all those markings, with the largest decal being only 1 cm long and the tail having six decals per side, but they responded well to Solvaset and behaved predictably. The model was airbrushed with Dullcote afterwards before the canopy was unmasked.

The tires were brush painted with acrylic tire black and glued onto the model. Previously sitting level, the plane now had a tilt to one side. It was only a millimeter difference at the wing tips, but that's half a foot in full size. I simply sanded the main gear tire on the high side and added a bit of thick super glue on the bottom of the low side tire. Now it was level again. I drilled out the ends of the four missiles used on the model and then painted them in a pale gray. I gave up on the decal stripes for the MICA EM missiles—no human being alive could trim and then position those things in between the missiles' fins, but the MICA EM stencil decals went on with no problems. I also painted on the red stripe for the air-to-air missiles rather than fiddle with the



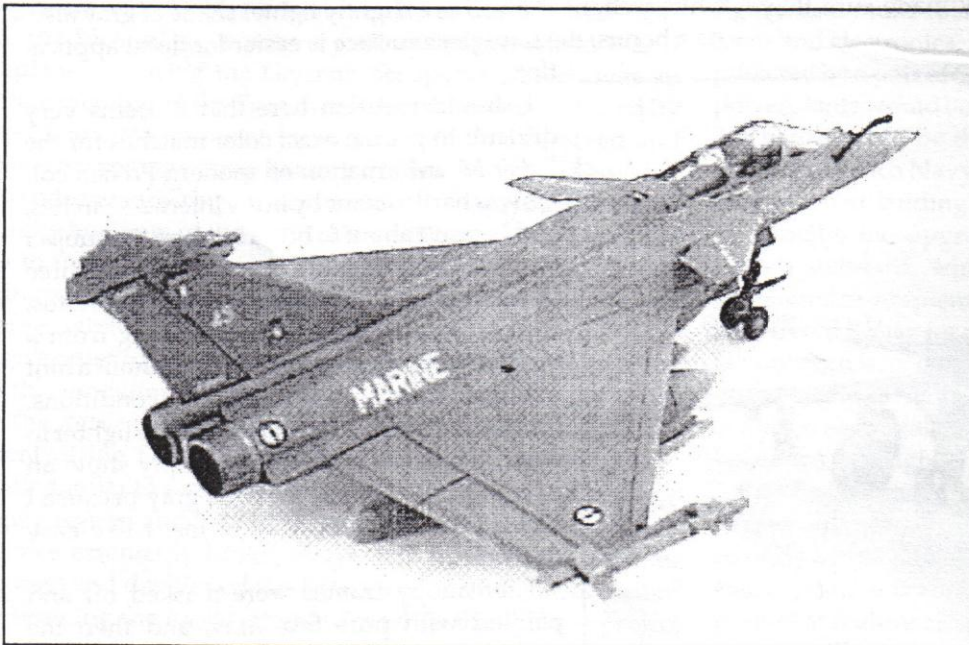
The ordnance provided in the kit is sufficient to make the bottom of the *Rafale* look busy.

decal, and I painted all the nose cones in a medium blue-gray. I used tiny amounts of superglue to attach the missiles to their rails.

The well-done exhaust nozzles had their insides painted in Testors Metallizer gunmetal, while the outsides were done with a mix of burnt iron and steel Metallizers with a steel base ring. All of this was done with a brush; you can brush small areas using Metallizers despite the "Airbrush only" warning on the bottles. The exhaust cones fit with just a bit of trimming on their outer edges.

Final details included painting the navigation lights on the wing tips (remember that those Commie Reds are always on the Left and you'll never again be confused on which side is red and which one is green) and installing the flat black refueling probe. Despite gluing on the refueling probe last, I somehow managed to knock the stupid thing off twice—I was lucky not to lose it to the carpet monster.

I like the looks of the *Rafale* series, but I wasn't sure if I wanted to get Revell's excellent 1:48 version of the M. Their 1:144 scale kit was a good choice for me as I had a built this *Rafale* M in just a few weekends of work, and despite its small size it is a better detailed model than Italeri's 1:72 version. If one is interested in 1:144, I would recommend this kit highly. It doesn't exactly fall together, but in reality what kit does? I would also recommend some type of magnifying lens for building it, but that goes without saying...



Another view of the completed *Rafale*. Greg's naval *Rafale* hardly looks like a 1:144 model!

Kombrig's 1:700 Rossiya: a classy cruiser kit

By Vladimir Yakubov

The armored cruiser *Rossiya* was the second in the line of three large armored cruisers build in Russia in 1890s. It followed the armored cruiser *Rurik*, which caused a lot of consternation in U.K. after its commissioning in 1895. Neither *Rurik* nor *Rossiya* were armored cruisers in the true form, since while they did have armored belts, their artillery was not armored. They were designed as commerce raiders with a very long (for the time) range of 7700 miles. In the sense of their design specifications and the reaction they provoked, they were similar to the German *Deutschland* class pocket battleships 40 years later.

Rossiya was laid down in May 1895 and commissioned in September 1897, a very fast construction time for the Russian shipbuilding industry, which took almost 6 years to build her predecessor *Rurik*. *Rossiya* displaced 12,580 tons, had top speed of 19.74

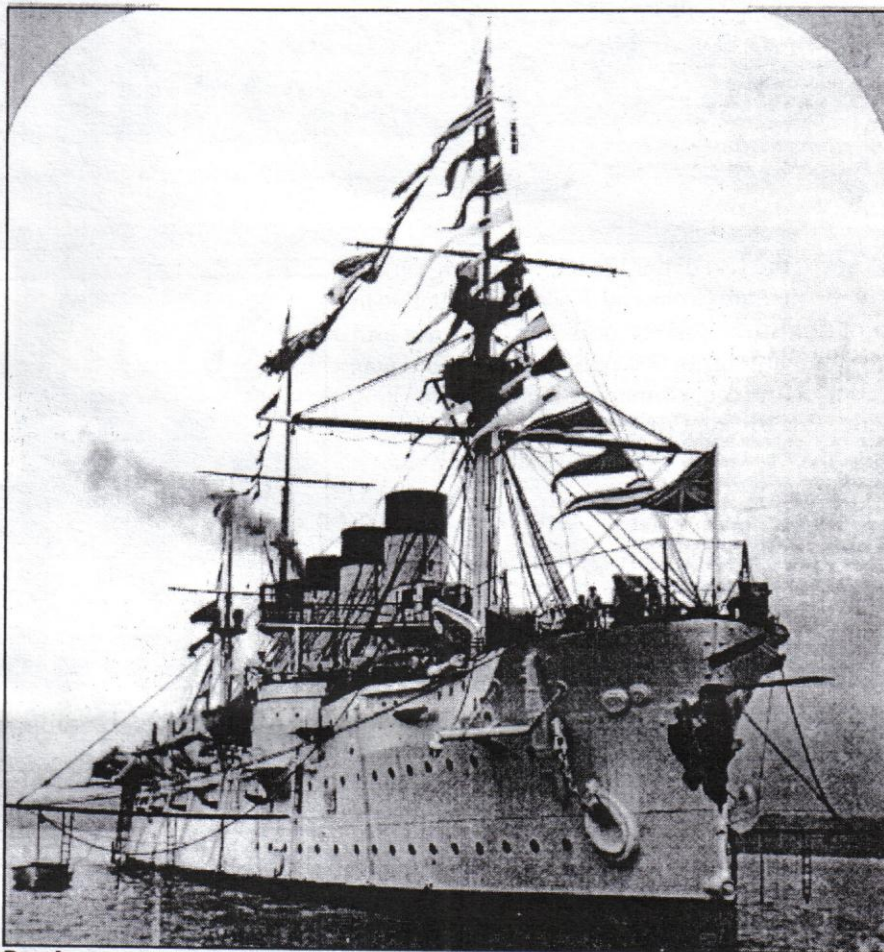
knots and was heavily armed with four 8-inch guns, 16 6-inch guns, 12 75mm guns, 20 47mm guns and 18 37mm guns. She also had five above-water torpedo tubes and was protected by an 8-inch belt of armor.

Soon after commissioning, she was sent to the Far East, where she together with her half sisters *Rurik* and *Gromoboy* formed a Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron. During the Russo-Japanese War they formed the only successful Russian naval unit of the war. In the first seven months of the conflict, they made six cruises in the vicinity of Japan, disrupting Japanese commerce and scaring Japanese citizens. At one time the things got so bad in Japan that a crowd burned a house belonging to Admiral Kamimura, who was assigned to catch these ships. The squadron's biggest success came when they intercepted the Japanese troop transport *Hitachi Maru* in the vicinity of Korea. After the transport refused to surrender it was destroyed along with at least 1000 Japanese soldiers and eighteen 11-inch siege guns destined for Port Arthur.

The end for the combat operations of the Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron came as it comes typically for such raiders,

cornered by superior forces and unable to run. It happened on August 1, 1904, when the Vladivostok cruisers were ordered to sortie to rendezvous with the main Russian fleet attempting to break out of the besieged Port Arthur. Unfortunately,

the 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 four armored and two protected cruisers 36 miles north of Tsushima, near the Korean port of Ulsan. The Russian squadron was slowed by the old *Rurik* (able to do less than 18 knots at the time) and was unable to evade more modern Japanese cruisers. *Rossiya*, flying the flag of Admiral Iessen, was the lead ship of the Russian column, followed by *Gromoboy* with *Rurik* bringing up the rear. The battle began at 0523 at 8500m.

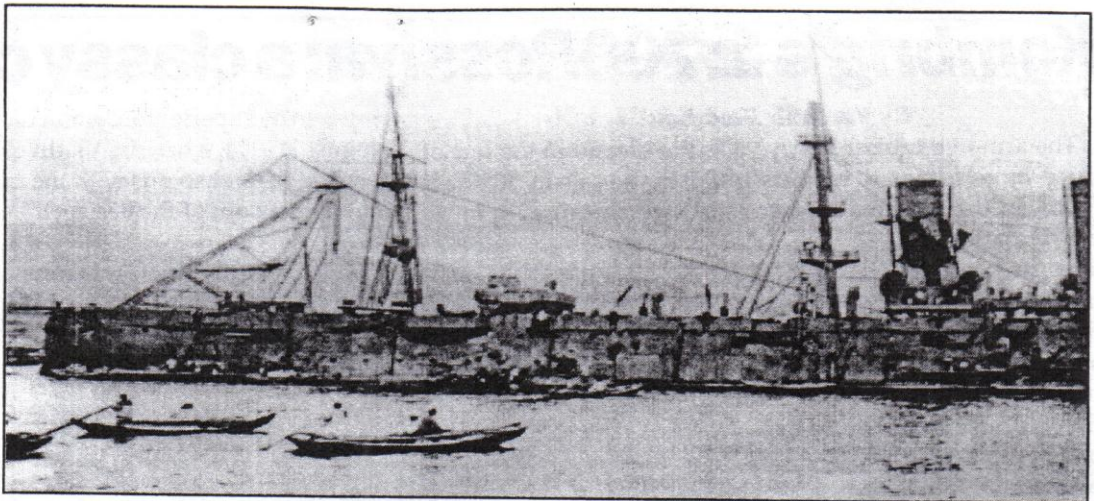


Rossiya on a pre-war visit to Japan. Early coal-powered ships often featured masts to extend their cruising ranges by use of sail power.

Within half an hour *Rurik* was damaged and started to fall behind the other two ships. The 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. Two other Russian ships tried to put themselves between the wounded *Rurik* and the Japanese, but by 0850 it was apparent that *Rurik* was lost and the Russian ships made their final turn toward Vladivostok, while at 1000 Japanese believing that some of their ships were running short on ammunition slowed down and turned back toward Tsushima. Last shots were fired at 1005 when the Japanese shell burst in the *Rurik's* conning tower killing her captain and leaving a Junior Gunner Officer, Lieutenant Ivanov, in command. He realized the hopelessness of the situation and was determined to prevent the ship from falling into Japanese hands and ordered the Kingston valves to be opened and scuttled the ship. During the engagement the Russian ships suffered heavy losses, with *Rurik* losing 170 killed and 230 wounded (only four out of 22 officers were unscathed), *Rossiya* having received over 30 hits and losing 44 killed and 156 wounded, and *Gromoboy*

having been hit more than 20 times and losing 87 killed and 170 wounded.

After their return to Vladivostok, with *Gromoboy* having hit a rock two months after the battle and the war going badly, *Rossiia* stayed in port for the rest of the war. After the war the ship was modernized with middle mast removed and all of the small caliber guns replaced with eight more 6-inch guns. In 1906 she was



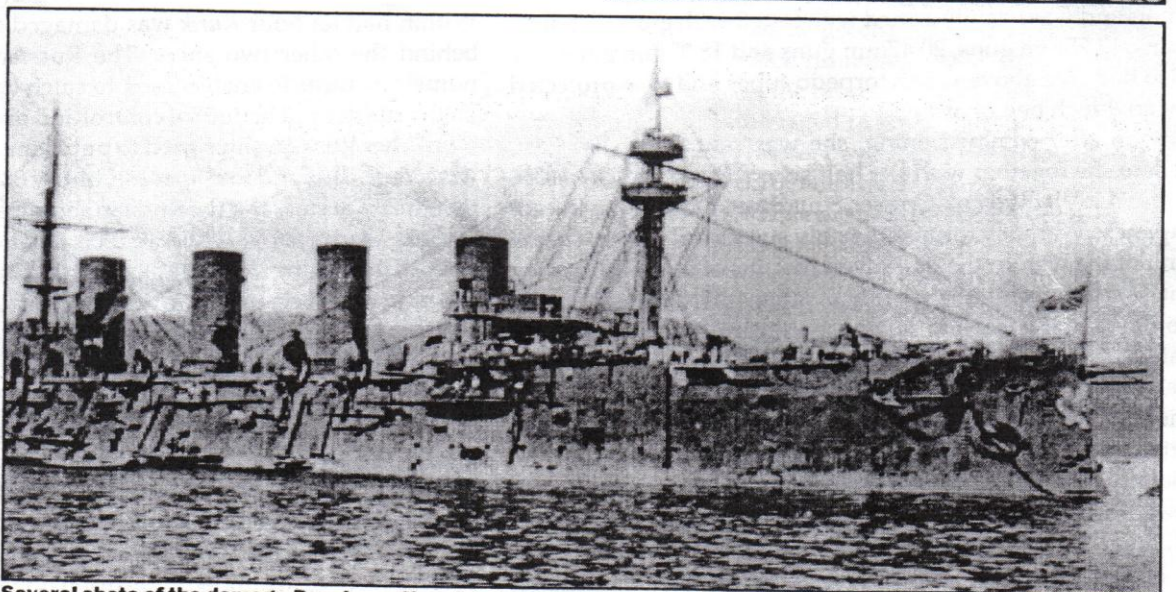
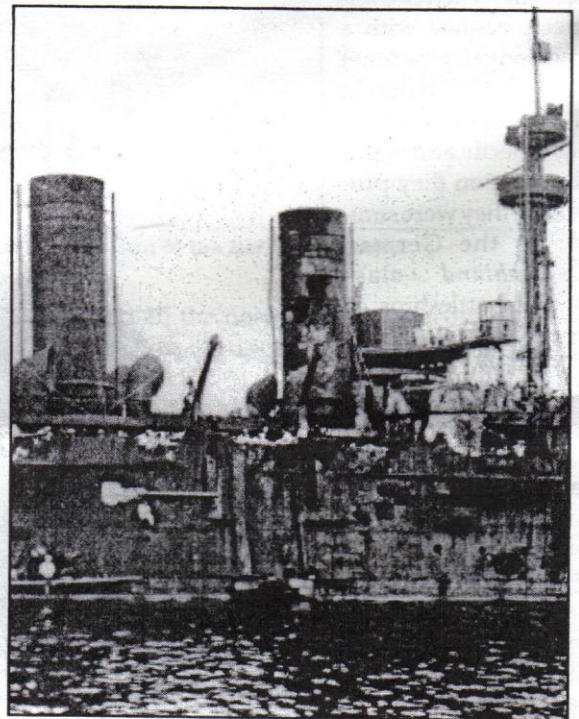
transferred to the Baltic and spent the rest of her life there. During World War I, along with her old squadron mate *Gromoboy*, *Rossiia* was active in nearly all of the operation of the Russian fleet, both laying mines and covering other ships during minelaying. In the winter of 1916 she was again modernized with addition of four more 8-inch guns on the centerline, tripling her heavy broadside. For the rest of the war she was mostly inactive, and after the revolution she was placed in reserve and sold for scrap in 1922 to a German company.

Rossiia has been in the *Kombrig* catalogues for a while and when I got the kit I was expecting the quality to be on par with their earlier kits, which is to say not all that great. However I was pleasantly surprised when I opened the box.

The kit was cast in the tan resin used on the newer *Kombrig* kits with all of the small parts also being of very good quality. The kit represents the ships as it appeared from commissioning until the end of Russo-Japanese War. There are two paint schemes that would be appropriate for this model. First is pre-war overall white hull and superstructure with yellow smokestacks with black tops and gunmetal gun barrels. Second one is of the overall dark Green ship as she was painted during Russo-Japanese War.

The hull is very detailed and is nicely cast for the most part. Unfortunately, too much mold release was used and there were several pits in the hull and the texture was pretty rough in places. Another gripe that I have

with *Kombrig* hulls is that there is an indentation running across the windows in the hull on most of their models and this one is no exception. I assume that it is from the master where they drew it so that all of the windows would line up, but didn't smooth it out later. The hull would require some cleanup, which would be difficult since there is a lot of the hull detail



Several shots of the damage *Rossiia* suffered during the battle of the Tsushima Straits. The damage kept her in port for the remainder of the Russo-Japanese War.

that would either have to be worked around or sanded off and replaced. On the plus, side the side and deck detail is excellent and it is the first *Kombrig* model that I've seen without any "Aztec" ladders.

One of the reasons that I love those old armored cruisers is that there isn't that much superstructure on them and *Rossiya* is of no exception. The superstructure consists of conning tower, two bridges and boiler room tops with smoke stacks. All of the superstructures are well cast on a very thin carrier film which will be easy to take off. Both boiler room tops and smoke stacks have locator pins that fit snugly and will make it very easy to arrange them on the ship. The castings are very clean and have no air bubbles or rough areas.

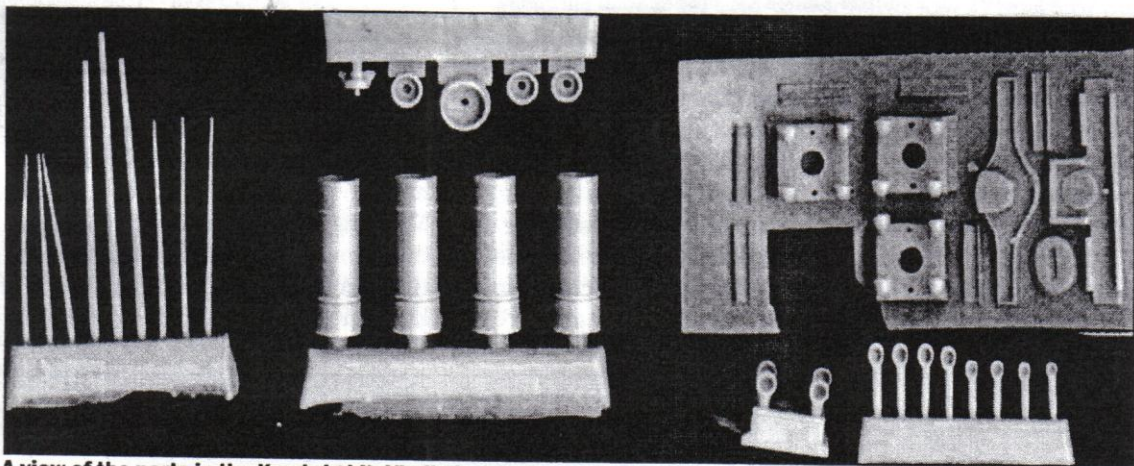
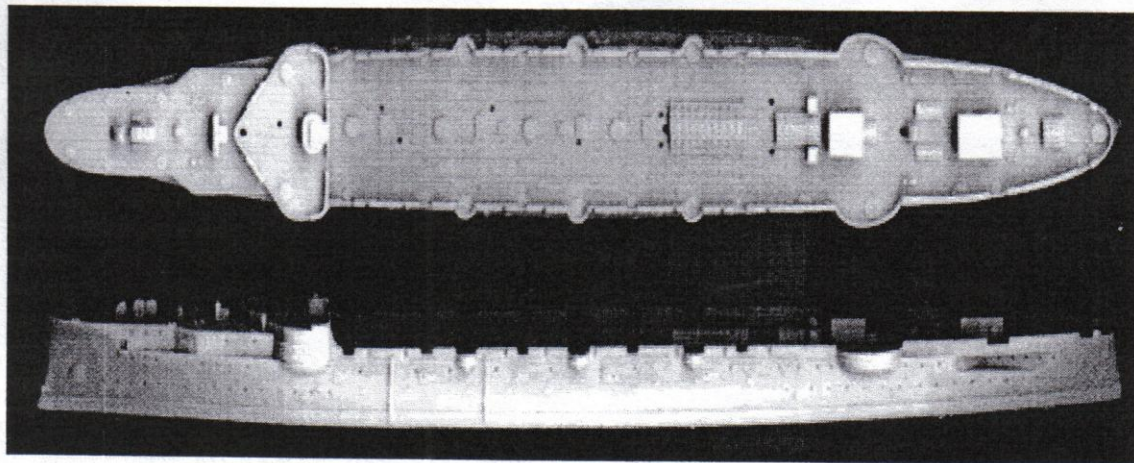
One of the criticisms that I heard leveled at *Kombrig* is that they include overly thick splinter shields in their models. That is however incorrect, since in many cases those are not splinter shields, but rather storage lockers for the sailor's hammocks. This is the case in this model. The aft bridge has what appears to be a thick splinter shield around it, but after an examination of the references it was actually hammock storage area. The forward bridge also has canvas covered railings around it, but it is much thinner and doesn't appear to be out of scale. One has to consult specific period references on whether it has to be removed or not, since at some photographs it appears that the canvas covering was used and at other times the rails were bare.

There are 14 boats in the kit which is enough to outfit the ship. The complex boat davits are excellently cast and are easy to remove from their carrier film.

As appropriate for any armored cruiser, the ship bristled with guns. Unfortunately no casemate-mounted guns are provided and these will have to be scratchbuilt. On the other hand, all of the deck guns are provided. There are two 8-inch guns, one 6-inch gun, 12 75mm guns and 20 47mm guns in the kit. All are very well cast, but many of the gun shields on the 47mm guns in my example were broken off. The two 8-inch guns behind the gun shields are usually included in other *Kombrig* kits as 6-inch guns, but after comparing them with my references the gun shields look about right for the 8i guns, since the gun shields for both types of guns were almost the

same. The gun barrel will have to be increased slightly in length from both sides of the shield to make a correct length of the gun barrel. The same thing can be said about the aft 6-inch gun. The gun shield looks about correct, but the gun barrel is too short. I usually replace all of the gun barrels with hypodermic tubing, so the absence of some gun barrels and the need to replace the others is not a problem for me, but others should be aware of them.

Instructions feature a brief history of the ship in both English and Russian (first time I've seen that in a *Kombrig* kit) as well as ship's stats and a 1:700 scale 2-view drawing of the ship. On the other side there is a photo of the parts of the ship and the diagram of what goes where. Unfortunately, both the diagram and the part photos show the parts before they were



A view of the parts in the *Kombrig* kit. Vladimir, a veteran of several *Kombrig* kits, says this is one of their better efforts.

updated and many of the parts shown on the diagrams don't exist in the kit. However, it is still very easy to understand and will pose no problems in construction.

Overall this kit is a good representation of *Rossiya* (I haven't measured the kit, since I don't have the waterline length). It has the potential to be an excellent model since all of the small details are excellently cast, but the problems with the hull cleanup and, to a smaller extent, the guns keep it from reaching that. It will certainly build up into good representation of *Rossiya* and I recommend this kit to an experienced modeler interested in Russian ships or the ships of the Russo-Japanese War. With its four stacks and three masts it will look distinctive, whether in its white or dark green camouflage.

Converting Italeri's 1:72 Mitchell into a B-25B

Continued from page 1

contiguous piece of glass around the curve. The pilot's should be, too. You can sand out the area with polishing sticks, or just do what I did: creatively mask. Mine looks more right, though close-up it is clear that something's not quite right. But from three feet away, it looks okay.

In step 2D, they show a semi-spherical clear piece being

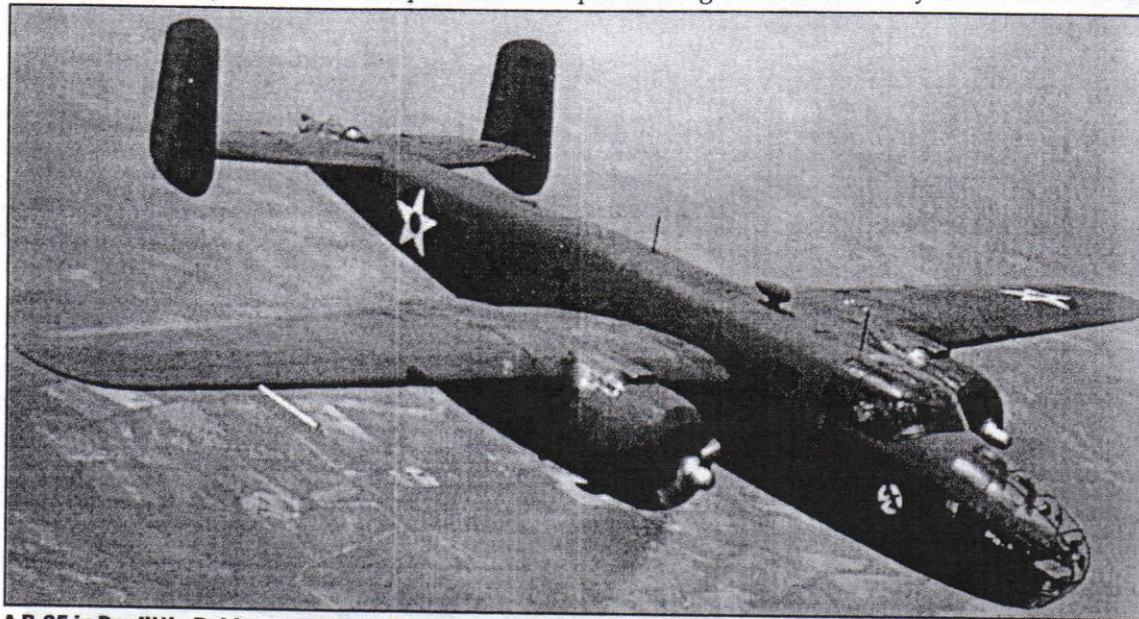
courage attacks from the rear.

3. Belly turret, props and exhausts

Don't install the belly turret; this too was deleted on these aircraft. The instructions cover this, but again their distinction between versions isn't always clear.

The props for a Doolittle raider are all black, including the hubs, with no yellow flash on the tips.

Even though the kit gives you two equal-sized exhaust ports, it tells you to only use them on the RAF version. They should be on these planes, as well. However, the left-side exhaust is significantly shorter than the other. Put the right-side one in place unaltered, but cut the straight part of the other one just past the curve of the exhaust flare itself. Leave a little less than 1/16 of an inch. Install it where you normally would, up against the cowling sections.

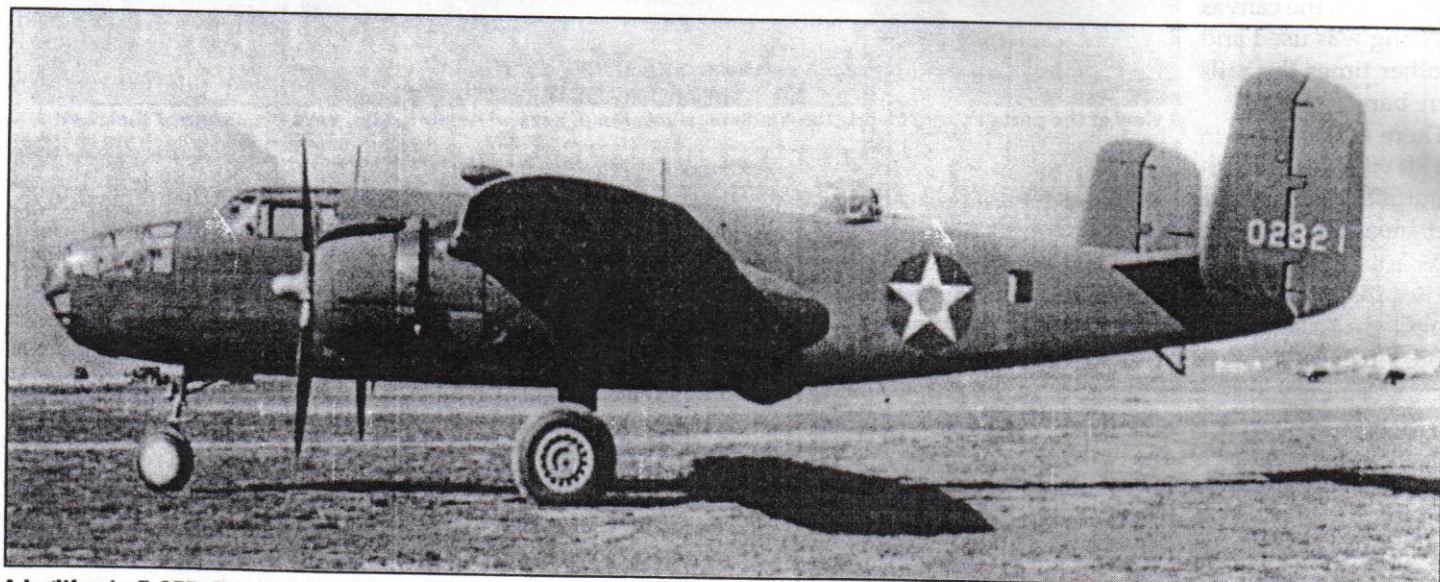


A B-25 in Doolittle Raiders markings. The absence of a dorsal turret may indicate this is a B-25A. Several B-25s toured the country as Doolittle planes for propaganda purposes.

attached over the top-side window just aft of the cockpit glass. The instructions aren't very clear on the fact that you should not install this for the B-25B. In steps 7L and 7M, they show .50 caliber machine guns being installed in the nose glass and tail glass. The Doolittle aircraft had to delete these for weight consideration. Use Micro Krystal Kleer (or just white glue) to create the impression of a rubber gasket in the holes where the guns would be. For the tail, you can add smaller-diameter rods painted black if you want—some of the crews took broom-handles and painted them to look like guns, to dis-

4. Landing gear

The gear on this is a real challenge. Not only is it considerably over-simplified, but it has to install when you join structural parts together (the nose gear strut must go in when the fuselage halves are joined, and the main struts have to go into the engine nacelles when they are joined). Masking around them is a real hassle, too. One of the other builders fixed the main struts on his so that he could snap them in later, but I didn't plan that far ahead, and I don't know how you would do it with the nose strut. I just let the



A legitimate B-25B. The smooth cowlings and the dorsal turret indicate its mark. The serial--402321--confirms its identity.

underside gray get on the struts and touched up the paint afterwards.

The wheels are the smooth tread pattern. The AM kit used the diamond tread, and I would trust their judgment. I believe Squadron has wheels in their *True Details* range for the 1:72 B-25 with the diamond pattern. They would be worth the investment, since they are usually only about \$3.

5. Painting and markings

The decals in the kit are for aircraft No. 1, tailcode 02344. The painting guides for the de-icing boots are not quite right, though. There should be de-icing boots between each nacelle and the main fuselage. They're not symmetrical, though, so check your references. The boots for the vertical stabilizers are also not quite right, but the wing's boots outboard of the nacelles match the painting diagrams in the *Accurate Miniatures* kit. I haven't used kit decals in a while, so you may want to shop for replacements.

We were lucky in that Bill made ours on an ALPS printer, so that we had all the planes covered. *SuperScale* and/or *Aeromaster* should be able to at least provide the national insignia and lettering styles for the tailcodes.

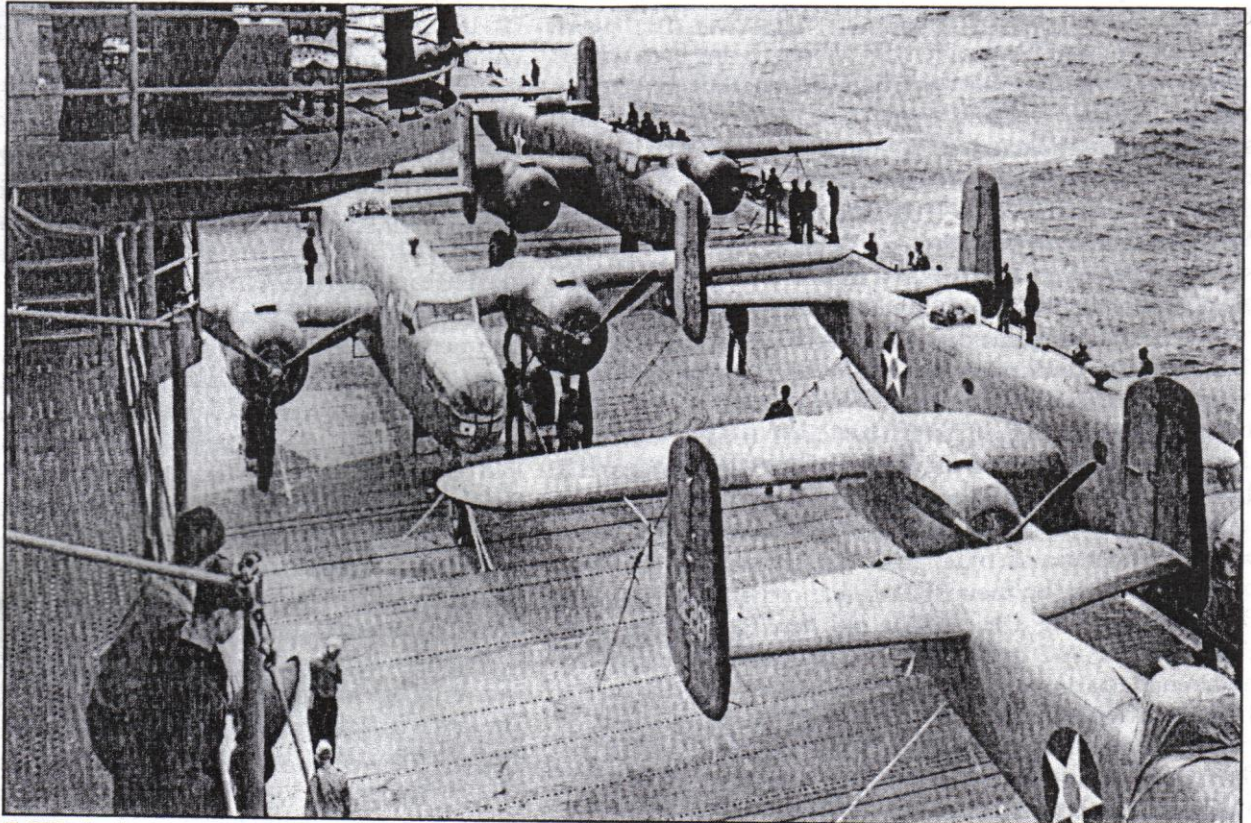
MARCH MINUTES

At the March meeting, Tom Trankle delivered word that the make and take so many members helped make happen was a success. The event saw six cub scouts and their dads discover the fun of scale modeling. Hopefully, this is just the first of many such events that SVSM will sponsor over the next year.

Greg Plummer, our outgoing president, was recognized for his second-place finish in *Car Modeler* magazine's National Custom Car Contest.

In our annual elections, Mike Burton was elected president by acclamation to preside over the 2003-2004 term. The new vice presidents and contest directors are Jim Priete and Greg Plummer, and Chris Bucholtz and Bill Ferrante return as Secretary/Editor and Treasurer for the 13th year in a row.

In model talk... Gabriel Lee built two *Sabres*-a camouflaged CL-13B licensed built Canadair *Sabre* and an F-86F in natural



B-25s lashed down on the deck of the Hornet as she steamed toward Japan. All 16 B-25Bs were lost on this mission.

Lastly, the kit features wing-tip formation lights. These early models had over-and-under lights just in-board of the wingtips. There are several good photos of these in the D&S book, in the sections on the B-25B and B-25C. I sanded the molded-in lights smooth, and added the dual lights with little dabs of red and green paint.

So, there you go. There are a lot of areas that can be improved in this kit, but aside from the pilot's glass and the engine exhaust pipes, you can build a very-nearly accurate Doolittle Raider from the box. I didn't specifically talk about weighting the nose down, as that should be obvious. Just be prepared to use a lot of weight, stashed where ever you can fit it.

metal-using the *Heller* kit and finishing them in Venezuelan markings. Gabriel also plans on building a pair of Venezuelan P-47Ds; his first, from the *Hasegawa* kit, is well-weathered, while his next one, which will be built from the *Revell* of Germany kit, will be factory fresh. Gabriel was pleased with the new *Revell Thunderbolt*, but he was less pleased with the new *Hobbycraft* F-16, a rebox of the *Intech* kit; at least it has Venezuelan markings on the decal sheet! Cliff Kranz likes the idea of a twin boom fighter, but he really likes the idea of a triple boom fighter. He combined two 1:32 P-38s to create a "Twin Lightning," with three engines and two cockpits. Add to this rockets and four bombs, and you get a terrible two-some. Martin Sczepan has started *Revell of Germany's* M2A2 Bradley fighting vehicle; he says it's a nice kit, with lots of detail and seam-proof engineering. Vladimir Yakubov brought

back his repaired Vladimir Monomakh; he said that in re-rigging the masts, he got his heat source too close and caught the rigging on fire! No problem; it's close to being back where it was when it won best in show at the Kickoff Classic. Vladimir is also working on a 1:72 Hover Tank from the science fiction book series "Hammer Slammer;" he got his resin tank on eBay. Barry Bauer built Heller's Bf 109K-4 out of the box and finished it in a scheme he found in one of the *Monogram* books on the Luftwaffe. Peter Wong used a *Tamiya* kit as a template to accurize and improve *Monogram's* *Mosquito*, turning it into a PRU aircraft with a couple of improvements and a coat of blue paint. Kent McClure decided that, if the Luftwaffe could survive until 1946 in some modelers' minds, then so could the Italians. That explains his 1:72 PM Ta 183 in Italian markings, to which he added just a little cockpit detail. Kent also showed off a Belgian T-15 light tank and a 1915 Model T Ford pickup, both in 1:72. John Knopff was looking for a colorful paint scheme for his 1:144 *Academy* B-24; and he found it in a sea blue/arctic red scheme used post-war by the U.S. Navy on their PB2Y-1s in northern climes. Mike Burton is building a trio of the old *Revell* kits of the F-89 *Scorpion*: an F-89C and an F-89H, both constructed using home-made parts, and a stock F-89D. Mike is working on the 1:77 scale *Revell* kits as a prelude to building some of *Hobbycraft's* fine *Scorpions*. John Heck says *Tamiya's* F4U-1 flew together; his heavily weathered *Corsair* was inspired by a model he saw on Hyperscale. *Airfix* kits never deter Ron Wergin; he built a pair of *Spitfire* Mk. Vs in U.S. colors using the 30 year old kits. Ron also built an *Airfix* Westland *Whirlwind* twin-engined fighter. Since the kits date from the mid-'70s, he used period paints (*Humbrol*)! Laramie Wright finished his *Italeri* Marine Sherman, turning it from an M4A3 into an M4A2 and outfitting it with *Cromwell* tracks and scratchbuilt secondary armor. As a finishing touch, Laramie added HO-scale railroad spikes on the hatches and turret to represent the 10-penny nails used in the Pacific to deter Japanese sappers. Steve Travis built a pair of 1:87 Bf 109s, one in desert markings and one in early-war markings. He picked up the kits in a "two-for-one" boxing at a train store. Eric McClure had three resin heads on sticks; he's painting and stripping them to practice his face-painting skills, using the techniques taught by Joe Fleming. Rodney Williams has three 1:72 *Aviation* *Usk* F2G *Corsairs* in various stages of completion; Rodney has made corrections to each kit to make it more accurate and has had a new set of revised decals printed by Dave Newman to depict F2G racers. Andy Kellock's *Italeri* EB-57E *Canberra* features dropped flaps, scratchbuilt ECM pods, *Zuni* rocket pods made from drinking straws and toothpicks, and a nifty two-tone green camouflage scheme. Andy also scored with his *AMT* Mercury, which was chopped, and a cool 1967 Mustang; he says the secret to getting good paint finishes on cars is to learn to use rubbing compounds the right way. Greg Lamb's two Bf 109s both started life as kits by *Otaki* and were outfitted with kits from *Hasegawa* kits. One has interior details from *Cooper Details* and a hodge-podge of decals from *Hasegawa*, *Otaki* and *SuperScale*; the other has markings from a CAM decals sheet. Frank Babbitt is almost finished with a *Hobbycraft* MiG-17F kit; he has his model painted, fitted with an intake cover and ready for decals. Frank plans for his "Fresco" to be finished as an Angolan aircraft. Chris Bucholtz is almost ready to paint his *Hobbycraft* CF-100 *Canuck*; he says the decals in the new editions of the kit will go to improve his older model. Bill Dye made his return to the club with a Von Braun Lunar Lander, which Bill thought would be a breeze (it wasn't); he'd built it when he was 10, but it wasn't much like he remembered! Bill also rehabilitated an *Airfix* *Sea Hawk* FGA.6, adding a vacuform canopy and Suez campaign markings from *ModelDecal*; a *Maintrack* 1:72 HP. 115 low-speed research aircraft, which Bill liked because of its lack of gear wells to detail; and a *Minicraft* DC-3, finished in Eastern Airlines colors as a nostalgia piece commemorating a plane ride he took early in life. Chris Hughes modified *Italeri's* Crusader tank with *Accurate Armor's* anti-aircraft turret, *Eduard* details and *Fruimodellismo* tracks to create a sterling ack-ack tank. Roy Sutherland is building a 1:48 *Tamiya* *Mosquito* NF.19, and he plans on building it with the finish on the fuselage scorched away following a fiery aerial victory. Hubert Chan said *Accurate Armor's* BT-7 was a tough build, thanks to a lot of warpage and he had to scrounge for small parts. Hubert re-posed the figures and made a based from Durham's Water Putty.

We had two collections of related subjects, both of which were built by club members for the Doolittle Raiders reunion. The first was a group of 1:1200 ships built to represent the U.S. fleet. Vladimir Vakubov has two of the cruisers built and has a third stripped down to the deck; he's added photo-etched railings and scratchbuilt masts to his two finished ships. Greg Plummer built the oilers *Cimarron* and *Sabine* from white metal kits; his toughest task was in grinding away the guns from the deck of the *Sabine* to make it accurate for that ship. And Chris Bucholtz built the U.S.S. *Enterprise*, adding scratchbuilt masts and gun tubs. Chris painted the deck with *Floquil* middlestone, then added the blue 5-S stain in such a way as to leave the deck looking weathered.

The other collection represents the Doolittle Raiders' B-25Bs, all built from the *Italeri* kit. Laramie Wright's B-25 is still under construction; he rescribed the model and has found lots of opportunities to practice his filling and sanding on this kit. Kent McClure had no nacelle problems, but he had a tough time fitting and masking the clear parts. Pete Wong discovered it takes about nine pennies in the nose to keep the B-25 on its nose gear. Braulio Escoto built the B-25 flown by crew number five of the Doolittle Raid, and he was inspired to finish his old *Revell* B-25 on a stand from 1957! Greg Lamb says his B-25 was "not that much fun;" he painted and decaled his model in a marathon session starting Friday morning. John Carr's B-25 was his first airplane in many years; he moved the tail guns to the turret and added detail to the cockpit. Greg Plummer's B-25 was completely rescribed, and was painted with *Testors* olive drab on top and medium sea gray on the bottom. Randy Ray's hardest task so far has been balancing the model on its nose gear; he's also had fit problems on the wings and nacelles. Finally, Mike Burton used acrylic *Polly S* paints to finish his *Mitchell*; he says he needs to shoot it with a bit more dullcoat because the decals are still shiny. And the model of the month goes to... Barry Bauer, for his cobbled-together Ju 388K, which he built using *Matchbox* Ju 188 wings, an *AeroModel* fuselage and nacelle conversion, and other assorted parts. After 10 years in a box, he's repaired it and returned it to its former majesty.

SVSM BOOKSHELF

Carrier Glorious: the Life & Death of an Aircraft Carrier

By John Winton

Cassell Military Paperbacks

Even if you're a carrier aviation enthusiast, chances are you know little about *HMS Glorious*, that odd-looking result of a 1924 conversion from battlecruiser to carrier. Her one memorable moment came during the desperate withdrawal from Britain's hopeless campaign in Norway, when she took aboard *Hurricanes* and *Gladiators* of the RAF's 46 and 263 squadrons. It was the week of Britain's more memorable escape from Dunkirk, and these aircraft and crews would be so urgently needed in the next weeks and months that it seemed worth the gamble to try landing aboard, despite the lack of arresting hooks or any deck-landing experience. They succeeded miraculously, but the deck was left so crowded that they were unable to fly patrols and *Glorious* and her two escorting destroyers were surprised and sunk in minutes by *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, leaving just a handful of survivors to tell the tale, including three of the gallant RAF pilots and two from Fleet Air Arm. At least that's the story we've heard. But here, John Winton fills in the missing pieces of the puzzle and offers a surprise ending, in some 220 pages of thoroughly researched but readable text.

It's history, not a modeler's book in the usual sense, with few pictures, but it fills in the interwar years with stories of how Britain learned the carrier aviation business. (Not too successfully, it seems: on Sept. 16, 1939, sister ship *Courageous* was sunk by a submarine while on a badly handled and rather pointless "hunter-killer" patrol, of the sort that would only meet success some four years later with USS *Guadalcanal* and her cohorts) There wouldn't seem to be great demand for such a book anyway, as I find only one 1:700 kit of *Glorious*, coming from Germany and costing a daunting \$140. But it makes interesting history as we follow a story that corresponded in many ways to that of USS *Saratoga* and *Lexington*.

It's when we get to the retreat from Norway that the book comes into its meticulous own. Yes, the decks were crowded with aircraft and, true, there were no search planes out. But that wasn't because of crowded decks. The lifts were 46 by 48 feet, big enough to accept the 40 foot *Hurricane*, and the upper of the two hanger decks was open at the bow, so the slow-flying *Swordfish* could have been launched from one or the other. It wasn't because of limitations of the ship that the searches were not flown and the ships and their crews were lost. Rather it was because the captain comes across as quite mad.

Capt. D'Oyly-Hughes had a distinguished record, but *Glorious*'s crew found that he viewed any dissent or questioning as nearly equal to mutiny, even if it came from the Air Officers in regard to their missions. By May 30, 1940, he had crushed all dissenters except for one, Cdr J. B. Heath, so the Captain put him ashore at Scapa Flow during a fueling stop. After returning to Norway, covering the evacuation and taking the RAF aboard, he turned *Glorious* back toward Scapa. Reconstructing motives after the deaths of most of the participants seemed daunting, but Winton turns up a signal that the

captain made to *Ark Royal*, stating he was hurrying home to conduct a court-martial, presumably of Heath. Hurrying too much, it seems, to take the time to turn into the wind to launch searches that might have saved the ships and their crews.

With the accuser dead along with 1500 others, the court-martial never happened, so Heath was neither convicted nor entirely cleared. Though well respected by his fellows, he hung in a sort of official limbo through the remainder of his career. The matter was pursued in Parliament, but wartime Britain needed heroes rather than men whose questionable actions had cost so much. Even today, proceedings remain sealed. It's a fascinating and disturbing book, with a hint of the mania that drove Captain Ahab to his doom.

Sunk by the Bismarck: The Life and Death of Battleship HMS Hood

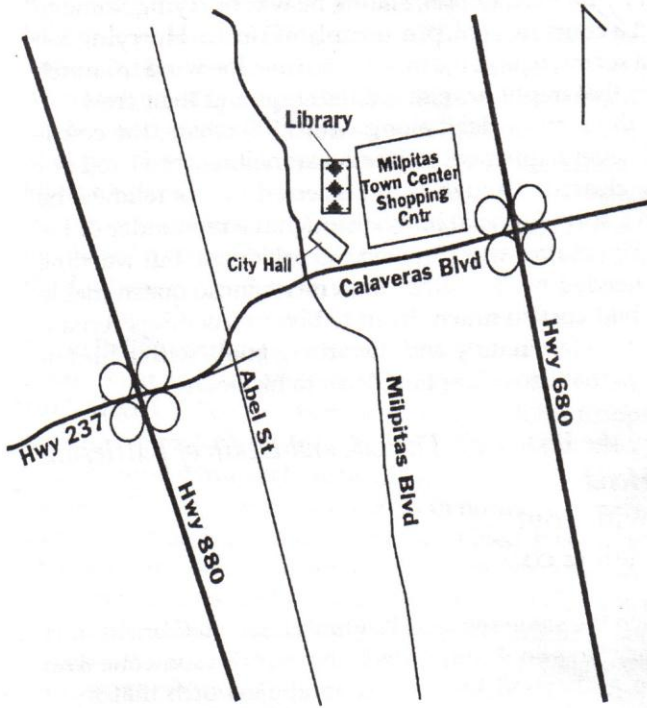
By Edwin Hoyt

G. K. Hall & co.

In much the same sense as Winton's book on *Glorious*, this is a history fan's book, but it fills in the years for someone who wants to go beyond the one paragraph's worth that most people know about the *Hood*. It follows the ship from commissioning through the interwar years of state visits and tours to "show the flag," emphasizing her place as the elegant symbol of British sea power. Then comes her frustrating assignment on neutrality patrol during the Spanish Civil War as she tries to protect British shipping from the Nationalist's blockade while watching German supplies flow easily past the Loyalists' near-nonexistent navy. We follow the early days of WWII, and with the end of the Battle of France, she is at Oran tasked reluctantly with the destruction of a sizable part of the fleet of her so-recent ally. Hoyt leaves a strong sense that someone in London blundered as they issued those orders. The future course of the war was becoming evident and *Hood* went in for refit that, according to Hoyt, left her heavier, less stable, and significantly slower. In late May, 1941, the story reaches a climax. That's well enough known but told again in detail as good as possible given the loss of so many of the participants.

Edwin Hoyt is good at his craft, as we see in books like *Men of the Gambier Bay*. His writing is lively and engaging, but I get bothered by small points sometimes. Over the North Atlantic, *Hood* is shadowed at one point by "big Heinkel flying boats" and off Italy is attacked by squadrons of "big Italian twin-engined bombers." I may not be absolutely clear on all the types that served the two nations, but neither of these descriptions rings quite true. The Heinkel 59 perhaps? Not exactly a "big flying boat." Italian twins? That implies Fiat, not their usual maritime attack types which were typically three-engined. Nothing earth-shaking, but when I notice two errors in info I think I know something about, it doesn't inspire confidence in the parts I don't know anything about. Like all of Hoyt's books, it's interesting reading, but this time I'm not quite comfortable with the research and editing that went into it.

—Bob Miller



Next meeting:
7:00 p.m.,
Friday,
April 18
at the Milpitas
Public Library
40 N Milpitas Blvd.
For more information, call the
editor at (408) 723-3995
E-mail: bucholtzc@aol.com



Chris Bucholtz, Editor
Silicon Valley Scale Modelers
P.O. Box 361644
Milpitas, CA 95036



DAN BUNTON
910 NIDO DRIVE
CAMPBELL CA 12345

If your renewal date is in red, it's time to pay your dues!