

Building a Revell 1/72 Handley Page Victor B Mk.2

By Andy Kellock

For you colonial fellows, the Handley Page Victor can best be described as the British B-52. A huge, swept wing, four engine bomber that was fast, flew at high altitude and could carry a nuclear weapon to the four corners of the globe (if one can actually say that a globe has corners....). The second in the famous British V-bomber series (the others were the

Vickers Valiant and the Avro Vulcan), this one has to be my favorite. There is something inspiring about the size and shape of the Victor that has always got me. Beautiful, yet ugly. Massively powerful, yet almost obsolete from the time it first flew. A big sweet potato with wings.

Like the B-36, the Victor came too late to be useful as a bomber, being almost stillborn into the missile age. And just like the B-52 found useful service

for many years as a conventional bomber, the Victor is best remembered in its role as an inflight refueling station. The K2 tanker version of the Victor has served in this role since the mid-60's and is still currently flying with the RAF. Victors were even used overseas in Operation Desert Storm.

The B2 version of the Victor had the more powerful Rolls Royce Conway engines and upgraded avionics. Due to the weight of the Bluesteel (21,000 lbs) nuclear missile, the

wings were lengthened for the increased load. The first B2's were painted Anti-Flash White to help shield the plane and crew from radiation produced during a nuclear blast. Since the large red/white/blue roundels in service at that time stood out starkly against the white finish, these planes had the first reduced visibility roundels of baby-blue and pink on the wing tops and fuselage. There were no underwing markings (I suppose they didn't want to advertise who just

dropped that ^ % # \$ & ! * bomb.....) The Victor B2 only served as a nuclear bomber between 1962 - 1970, when these duties were taken over by the Vulcan.

Finding reference material on these old British V-bombers (especially in their V-bomber roles) is more difficult than you'd imagine. Apparently the British take their high-risk clandestine activities more seriously than their trans-Atlantic cousins and everything is very hush-

hush. However, I did find a few good websites (links) that had several black and white photos that helped some. I also found several accounts written by personnel who had served with the Victor. While these accounts didn't help me build the model, they were fascinating reading, and definitely added ambience to the experience.

The kit used was the Revell of Germany (04326) re-release of the old Matchbox 1/72 K2 tanker. Thankfully it is now

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The Handley Page Victor B Mk2 was a high altitude nuclear bomber and was part of the British V-bomber series. It served in the late 1960s.

EDITOR'S BRIEF

It's the winter solstice holidays again. For many of us it's one of the most stressful times of the year and the club would like to do its part in helping to make things a little more so by having its annual gift exchange. Actually it's a lot of fun and Chris Bucholtz outlines the rules below. Most of you have done this before but my recommendation is to buy something that you would want to open yourself. This keeps the quality of the kits high and at the very least there will be kits you will want to steal from the other members.

Now go grab some cookies and milk and climb up on Uncle Chris' lap and he will tell you a story about the SVSM Holiday Gift Exchange.

—The Editor

Dashing through the snow, in a one-horse open sleigh, is for wussies! We know that the true reason for the season is the mettle-testing, hope-crushing, present-stealing SVSM gift exchange! For the newcomers, these are the ground rules. For the old-timers, these are the steps you take to crush the holiday spirit of your fellow scale modelers!

This year, we shall meet at the Milpitas Library. In years past, we gorged ourselves on pizza, but the authorities came to the conclusion that the consumption of that many carbs combined with that much pizza grease constituted a health hazard both to us and to the immediate environment. Instead, we will again hold a more sedate event: a light holiday potluck. Bring snack-type things (cookies, candy, chips, etc.), sodas, or some other library-friendly hors d'oeuvre item from which we can all partake in the lead-up to the big event. Remember: it's polite to have napkins. It's even more polite to use them.

Once the grumbling stomachs have been quieted, it's time to get to the grumbling modelers with the gift exchange. Anyone may participate, or choose not to. The gifts should be valued at \$15; higher-priced gifts are okay, too. The bigger the gift, the more stealing will ensue. Please bring no more than three gifts (this being the Jim Priete rule) so that we can conclude the event at a reasonable hour, and make sure the gift is wrapped.

When you arrive with your gifts, your name shall be written on a piece of paper (or pieces, depending on how many gifts you bring). These names will go in a hat. Also, write your name on the gift. This is our way of ensuring that violators of the "lame laws" will be subject to the full ostracism of the club. The lame laws prohibit the alleged "gifting" of low-quality or partially-built kits; there shall be no Lindberg, no dumping of outdated kits, and no purging of useless supplies. Bring a model you would actually want. Violators will have their crap gift given back to them and their names removed from the hat.

The gifts shall be piled on the table, and at the proscribed hour of 8 o'clock, the gift exchange shall begin.

The sequence is as follows: The first name is drawn, and that person briskly scampers to the table, selects a wrapped gift, and opens it for all to see. The next person whose name is drawn may open his own present or steal the first present, in which case the first person will open a second present. The


third person may open a fresh present or steal from the first two recipients, who may then either steal from each other or open new presents. After a present is stolen three times, it is dead and out of play. This continues until all the presents are opened or Bert McDowell's ship model is stolen, whichever comes last.

Some of you learn best by examples. Here's an example of what might be:

Steve Travis is chosen to open the first present. He overlooks several car-shaped boxes and inexplicably opens an ICM Yak-9. "Oh, gosh... Just what I was hoping for!" stammers Steve, who starts to perspire slightly at the idea of building another 1:48 ICM Yak-9. Ken Miller selects next and opens an Accurate Miniatures TBF Avenger for his troubles. "Hey, did any airlines ever fly the TBF?" ventures a hopeful Ken. Next is Greg Plummer, who takes pity on Steve and steals his Yak-9. Steve then gets up and opens a car-shaped box with a Revell '72 Dodge Challenger in it, and he breathes a sigh of relief. Next is Mark McDonald, who, seeing no armor to steal, opens the next gift: a DML early-production Tiger. Nick Moran is selected next, and while he enviously eyes Mark's Tiger, he cunningly swipes Ken's TBF, believing it will be stolen later and give him a chance at the third and final steal of the Tiger. Paul Bishop is up next, and since nothing yet opened is larger than a cubic meter, he selects a huge box: it's a 1:32 Academy F/A-18! Jim Lund's name is picked, and he looks around bleakly: nothing 1:72, nothing vacuformed! "I guess I'll just have to open up this big, flat one here," he says, unveiling an eastern European vacuform kit of the Yak-40 airliner! Laramie Wright, the next participant, quickly swipes Mark's Tiger. Mark steals Nick's TBF, and Nick grabs the F/A-18 from Paul. Paul opts to grab the TBF from Mark, which might become part of the air wing for Paul's next large-scale ship. That's steal three for the TBF – it's now dead! Mark grabs the Tiger back from Laramie, who returns to the pile and pulls out a Dragon 1:700 Essex! Bert McDowell quietly mutters as harsh a word as Bert can come up with. Kent McClure is next, and, in a break with his normal genre, he steals the F/A-18 from Nick. Nick grabs the Tiger from Mark (now it's dead – Nick gets to take it home!) and Mark opts to open the next gift: a Tamiya FAMO! Ron Wergin is selected next; he sees only the Yak-40 in 1:72, so he steals it from Jim, who pilfers the 1:700 Essex from Laramie, who steals the FAMO from Mark, who takes the F/A-18 from Kent (thus getting the third steal), who goes to the stack and opens a box containing five sets of CMK 1:72 figures. "My entire year of modeling is taken care of!" He exalts. Next is Frank Babbitt, who grabs the Yak-40 from Ron, who takes the figures from Kent, who takes the Essex from Jim, who steals the Yak-40 from Frank (third steal!), who steals the figures from Ron, who steals the Essex from Kent... You get it by now.

That is the way it works. While it seems complicated, the expert record-keeping of Chris Bucholtz and his pitiless, iron-fisted rulings will maintain order throughout. As always, any violent acts of retribution should be confined to the parking lot. And happy holidays!

—A Vice President



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1:00 p.m. - Judging Begins
3:30 p.m. - Awards**



Commandos!—creating custom gaming pieces

By Kent McClure

Somewhere far off in a distant corner of the galaxy, churning in a vat of primordial ooze, a proto-being is about to be granted the spark of life. Everything is in balance. Radiation levels are high enough to carefully stimulate the recombination of DNA and RNA strands. Roiling with each new combination, the thousands upon thousands strands of proto-life strive for existence before fading away into oblivion. Occasionally a few strands survive fractionally longer than the others and spawn off their own genetically superior offspring. They in turn repeat the performance, each newer generation just a little bit stronger than the last. Time passes, but just how much time no one can say, as life stretches out into the galaxy.

Now fast forward a few billion years or so. Huddled underneath some rusted out corrugated tin, a squad of soldiers are doing their best to stay dry during a pouring monsoon. Most are huddled around a fire that is barely staying alive. A couple of them are staring out into the rain, watching for something that hopefully is not there. Someone brought out a small pocket radio, it's tinny speaker blaring out exhortations from the ministry of propaganda. Most of the soldiers want to laugh out loud at the nonsense that is being broadcasted. But they know better. Headquarters always had a way of rooting out the dissidents. A harmless jest heard by the wrong person and you could easily end up disappearing. Or worse yet, something could happen to a family member. Sure, they'd be replaced by the next litter, but you never want to lose someone if it can be helped. Just stay on the good side of the Natural Social Rodent Workers Party.

Rodent? Well, yeah, rodent—as in rat, or Ratzi to be more precise. Welcome to the world of Critter Commando. It's a universe filled with anthropomorphic beings trying to enslave one another with races like The Ratzi Empire, Catslovakia, the F.R.O.G. Federation, Cheesia, the United

Kennel, and some really truly Banana Republics. This is the world of Critter Commandos – a tongue-in-cheek approach to wargaming created by Paul Arden Lidberg.

What makes Lidberg's creation so fun is the wonderfully sculpted figures that he has produced to go with his rules. The Ratzis are wearing your standard Wehrmacht uniform. There is a group of canines dressed as a famous comic book collection of commandos complete with an appropriately named top sergeant (Sgt. Furry). The leader of the Banana Republic is a gorilla dressed up as a generalissimo, complete with a chest full of metals.

While the stock figures are fun to paint, an added bonus

is the opportunity to create your own troopers. While some people are marvelous at sculpting I am not. I cannot take a raw armature wire and add sculpting material to create a brand new figure. No way what-so-ever (heavy valley girl accent)! But, what I am good at is cheating and here is how you can do it too.

The first thing that you'll need is a body, or a number of bodies if the desire is to make up a full squad. The easiest way to do this is to visit your local graveyard – oops! Sorry, wrong story.

That should be your local hobby/gaming store. No matter how good the store is, there is always some figures that end up getting overstocked or accidentally purchased and end up in the discount bin. This is the easiest and cheapest way to get the body parts you want. Just what style of body you're looking for is up to you. Some people prefer the more realistic looking sci-fi type of trooper. These would be along the lines of what you would see in the current crop of TV or movie live action productions. Others prefer what I call the Conan the Barbarian look—massive body armor with incredible huge weapons that only a body builder governor could lift. This is the look that is favored by Games Workshop for their Warhammer 40K line. The real secret is to choose a body that will convey the characteristics or impressions of the animal you are trying to mimic. A rhinoid (rhino like humanoid) should have some serious



The crowdads actually started as dwarf figures. After decapitating the figures, Kent built the new heads out of Milliput.

meat on his bones, while a walking stick (or any insectoid) should not. I may personally loathe the Warhammer style of figure for my serious sci-fi troops, but for Critter Commando work there are no better donors around. If the figure material should happen to be plastic or resin, that will make the slicing and dicing involved in the conversion work so much easier.

Well, once you've gotten the bodies pulled together, all you need now are some heads. These will be the easiest and at the same time the hardest parts to collect. What makes them so easy to collect is that you can find heads almost any place— from the craft side of hobby stores to the local party or dollar store. Unfortunately, it is that same wide range of resources that makes collecting the heads so difficult. Quality can be anywhere from museum precision to being barely able to identify the donor species. Cost can be mere pennies or your next mortgage payment. If you're a good painter, you can get away with using any sort or colored plastic donor figure. If there is something more difficult, you might want to use one of those museum or zoo quality animal.

With your array of donors properly assembled, it's time to drag out the rest of the equipment needed for your job. These include, but are not limited to, a variety of very sharp X-Acto knives, a miter saw or other similar fine toothed saw, pin vise, assortment of drill bits, various putty knives, files, sandpaper, pain killer (ether or grain alcohol), brass wire,



Raccoons of the 1st Alabama Volunteers: the grenadier is armed with the deadly Pepsi can and an the assault trooper is in power armor.

pins, Green Stuff and/or Milliput, various forms of epoxy or superglues to suture up the wounds, etc. In other words, you might as well drag out your usual modeling toolbox.

If you have even the vaguest of ideas as to how you want the finish product to look, then you are already ahead of the game. Try to get a good body/head match. By this I mean, try to choose a body that has, or will have, a cross-sectional neck area that is the same size or slightly bigger than the cross-sectional neck area of the animal head that is being used. That way you will allow yourself some leeway in positioning the head, and you can build up a collar area to hide any potential sins. Also, consider if the figure's head

is to have a certain inclination to it. Is it looking up or down or maybe sideways? This can be accomplished by the initial cuts made to both the donor head and body.

When everything is ready to start, make sure the patient is properly anesthetized before the initial incision is made. Then with a number 11 scalpel make a cut 14mm long across the...Oops! Wrong operation. Okay, let's backtrack. You'll want to lop off a couple of heads. Usually, I start with the hu-



Penguins defending their homeland in the Falklands. The figures depict infantry with armored support.



After completing the figures, Kent attaches them to bases made of 30 thousandths thick plastic that has been roughed up. The base is then painted green or brown, depending what the terrain is supposed to be and then finished with ground cover.

man head courtesy of the fine bladed miter saw. Most of the time I try to make this cut as horizontal as possible unless I want to have the head at a specific inclination. Then, I do a sort of eyeball fit of the animal head to the human body. By this I mean take the complete animal and maneuver the headless human body around until I get the look that I want. If it is a simple enough cut, I'll take my X-Acto knife and make a clean cut to remove the head. If it looks like it will turn out to be a funny angle. I'll try to mark the cut line with a fine point permanent marker. Then using either

the foremost or rearmost point, I'll cut the neck at a greater angle than I want. This allows me to test fit the head, slowly dropping the angle down until I get the fit that I want. This is another reason why I do my first cut on the metal figure - plastic is much easier to cut. When I achieve the angle that I want, I will drill a shallow hole into the center of the animal head and insert a short metal rod. I will dip the end of the rod into black paint use it to mark where on the body I'll drill the matching hole. These final alignment holes are usually 1/8 to 1/4 inch deep. To secure the pieces together, I have found a superglue that is specifically designed for softer plastics called Plastix by Loctite. This superglue comes in two parts - the adhesive and an activator. Paint one side of the bond with the activator, place a drop of glue on the other and then push the pieces together.

Of course, no matter how precise you try to be, the odds are that you will not get a 100% seamless neck to body joint. But that's okay. That's why there's filler. Depending on whether or not I feel like getting my fingers all messy, I will use either Squadrons Green Stuff or fine Milliput to make the collar. I'll build up a beadline that will cover the entire neck area and is 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch thick. If I'm using the Milliput, I will start smoothing the collar out almost immediately using a fine, wet spatula. When using Green Stuff, I'll let the putty dry for about 20 minutes or so before I start shaping it with Testor's liquid cement. I use the brush applicator to smooth down Green Stuff and to refine its shape



Kent achieves the shading by drybrushing over black (medals) and then dipping in MinWax stain to add shading.

When the collar is the way that I like it (or when I can no longer stand the smell of the glue), I'll leave the entire project alone so it can dry.

When my head finally clears up (usually in a day or two), I will use a Flexi-file with some fresh sandpaper to continue refining the collar. If need be, I'll add some more putty and repeat the process. I will also add any other details that need to be added at this time such as a collar-line or paper collar tabs. If there are any other details that need to be added to the figure itself, now is a good time to do it. This includes any extra weapons, packs, etc. that you'll want on the completed figure. A primer coat of light grey will reveal any gaps that need to be taken care of before painting can start.



None other than the famous Sgt. Furry and some of his Howling Commandos.

Now sometimes you just can't find the right donor head for your project. This happened to me when I picked a set of resin musket armed dwarves at a flea market during a gaming convention. I was looking specifically for some donor bodies when I spied this pack of eight figures. The guy selling them wanted only a couple of bucks for them. Being a true Scotsman, I couldn't pass up a bargain, even though I had no idea what I was going to do with them, so I bought them. Well, over the next few days, I kept looking at the dwarves trying to decide just what the heck they would become. And one thought kept cropping up in my mind - these bearded little buggers' heads are really triangular in shape. So what critter has a triangular shaped head? I had a vague inkling of an idea, but I wanted to confirm my suspicions and that meant a trip to D&J Hobbies and the craft department. And yes, I confirmed my fears. I saw a plastic lobster and it definitely had a triangular shaped head. But lobsters tend to have a bumpier carapace and are not all that colorful. So I switched gears and went looking for their freshwater cousins, the crayfish or crawdad if you're one of the simple country folk.

Needing to verify some minor details, I went back to the

web. Do you know that there is a great Website out there covering almost every type of crawdad with color photos of each and every one? It's called Crayfish World (real original, huh?). Anyway, I went over there and started to look around. About two hours later I had chosen the color schemes that I was going to paint the little buggars in even before I had started to convert them. Additionally the Website did confirm the details that I was interested in.

So, out came the X-Acto knife, a fresh #11 blade, and a couple of Band-Aids (preventive maintenance since very time I put a new blade in the X-Acto I end up slitting a finger), and two victims. Now the dwarves were your basic Daniel Boone style figures - coon skin cap, fringed hunting shirt and pants, and muskets. Being dwarves, they had that wonderful full face beard. It was that beard that gave them the triangular shaped head that I needed. Out came the knife and in a few seconds, the coonskin cap was missing its tail, the dwarf was missing his nose, the beard is even more pronouncedly triangular in shape and I was bleeding on my workbench. It was definitely time for a coffee break.

Okay, the bleeding has stopped and the thumb is no longer throbbing. That must mean it's time to get back to work. Using Squadron Green Stuff, I begin building up layers until a rough approximation of the head shape is achieved. This was allowed to dry for about a half hour. Then I grabbed the good old Testor's liquid cement and "painted" the putty smooth. I repeated this "putty and paint" process over the course of a few days until I achieved the desired final shape, at which time I did a light sanding job using 600 and 800 grit sandpaper. A quick splash of white paint was applied to see if there were any remaining



Kent's frontier crawdads started out as dwarf figures (left). The figures await paint after building up the heads out of Milliput and adding facial features (right).

flaws that needed fixing.

I took a break from the head in order to modify the hands into claws. Unfortunately, this part of the conversion didn't yield really satisfying results. The hands were awkward at best and needed more knife work than I would have preferred. The "putty and paint" process was used to finish off the claws, but in retrospect I feel that the results were more like boxing gloves than claws.

With heads and claws complete, a few final details needed to be added before painting could begin. These were the eyes and the antennae (feelers). The eyes were round-headed pins that had the pin part cut down to only a few millimeters in length. Receiving holes were drilled about 1/3 of the way up from the tip of the nose and on either side of the head's center ridge. A little drop of superglue secured the eyes in place. The antennae would be a little less straightforward. If you look at a crayfish (or a lobster, for that fact) you will usually see two sets of antenna. The first set consists of three small antennae that seem to come straight out from the bottom of the nose, forming a sort of bisected angle. Three very small holes were drilled to accept some very fine wire to represent this set. The second set of antennae are the two long ones that come out of a short, thicker segmented appendage at the nose and extend back most of the body. To make the segmented base I grabbed a piece of narrow diameter plastic coated metal rod that Plastruc used to produce. I carefully stripped off two pieces of the outer plastic covering and superglued them



Stormtrooper Rats—Kent modeled their uniforms after historical German World War Two uniforms.

to either side of the nose. A long length of fine wire was then superglued into the base, curved backwards over the top of the head and trimmed to its final size. A couple of quick passes with the can of primer white and the figures are ready to paint.

Painting is where I really can have some fun on two different levels. The first is the uniform itself. Depending on how I feel, I can do the uniform based on a single color historical uniform, a historical camouflaged uniform, a hypothetical camouflage pattern, or purely fantasy-based uniform. For example, I have three squads of stock Ratzis. These guys are for all intents and purposes oversized rats

wearing standard Wehrmacht uniforms. So, with that in mind, I painted them up as if they were German. But I painted up one squad in standard field grey, one as Deutsche Afrika Korp and one as SS. I have a set of penguins wearing the classic British WW1/WW2 helmet that ended up being painted as Tommies. My Sgt. Furry and his Howling Commandos are painted exactly as their comic book counterparts are colored. A squad of raccoons were painted up as a Confederate state regiment from Mississippi. These all used legitimate uniforms from historical sources. My "United Nations" (well, Forests, actually) powered armored guys have uniforms based on the urban brick camouflage that was painted on some British Chieftains stationed in Germany



D.A.R.K. - Duetsche Afrika Rat Korp, including power armor (with boxing glove).

during the 1990's. My gorilla guerillas are examples of purely fantasy based uniforms – picking and choosing colors that just look good together.

As I said, I approach painting these figures at two levels. For me, the second level is to make the animal look as close to the real thing as possible. That means, I want a giraffe that looks like a giraffe – not a long necked aardvark. This means that I will spend quite a bit of time in the library looking through reference books or Audubon type guides trying to determine the correct coloration. I also utilize the Internet quite a bit, which sometimes yields too much information. (Never do a Google search on a multi meaning animal name such as bat. It'll take you forever to get the right thing.)

Once armed with a clear idea as to the critter's colors, a visit to your local craft shop to get the paints is in order. This is where the cheap hobby acrylics really come into play.

For the price of a bottle of Gunze or Tamiya, you can get 2 to 3 bottles of Ceramcoat or Apple Barrel paints that have about twice as much paint in them as the model paints. Just because the paint doesn't state that its color FS xyzzz or RLM pinkish purple, it shouldn't be dismissed. There's plenty of colors available that are perfectly fine for figures, automobiles and armor. And according to Anita Travis, these craft paints spray fairly well

when you thin them down with alcohol. (Note: thin down the paint with alcohol, not the painter.)

My painting technique for figures varies quite a bit, depending on whether or not I am working against a self imposed deadline. In most cases, I begin with the base coat. Some painters use the method of working from the inside out – skin first, then the successive layers of clothing. I usually use the "what paint do I have available now" method, trying to use the lighter colors first but not always. If the figure has some prominent detail sculpted on it (such as the medals on Gorilla Generalissimo), I'll paint those details flat black first and then will drybrush back over them with the final colors. The underlying coat will act as a shadow effect. The same process can be done with belts, buttons, collars – anywhere that two pieces of cloth overlap. This method is sometimes referred to as lining.

On those occasions when I am rushed or the detail is not prominent, I will fall back to a modified version of a

technique called dipping. Dipping involves temporarily affixing the figure to the head of a large nail, dipping the figure into a can of MinWax dark walnut (or similar color) stain, shaking off the excess, and allowing it to dry. This technique does have two inherent drawbacks. The first drawback is that it has to be done in an area where you don't mind splattering the staining color. That usually means outdoors during nice weather. The second drawback is called the disappearing flying figure. This occurs when you 1) do not securely attach the figure to the head of the nail or 2) do not have a firm grip on the nail as you vigorously shake off the excess stain. Since I don't relish either of these situations occurring, I modified the technique to where I simply brush on the stain.

There is one other alternative staining method that can be used to create the shadow effect. This is using a product called Miracle Dip. Miracle dip is nothing more than taking

Future Floor Wax and adding drops of black ink into it until you get the desired color. Then you simply apply it like a wash over the figure, allowing it to settle into the creases, etc. Normally I don't use this technique because I feel that the MinWax provides a better protective coat – something rather important considering that these are gaming pieces that are expected to get a lot of handling. However, if I was

doing figures for a small diorama, then I would use the Miracle Dip to create the shadows and drybrushing to make the highlights.

As a final touch, I usually base these figures on a square of 30 thou thick plastic that has been roughed up. The base is then painted green or brown, depending what the terrain is supposed to be. Finally, ground cover, be it static grass, one of the many Woodland Scenics varieties of turf or just plain dirt, is added.

And there you have it—the wild world of a demented mind and pushing the hobby to the extreme—a far extreme. One that is way out there—way, way out there...



The pronounced collars on the bongo (left) and the pelican (right) were accomplished using Green Stuff and liquid cement.

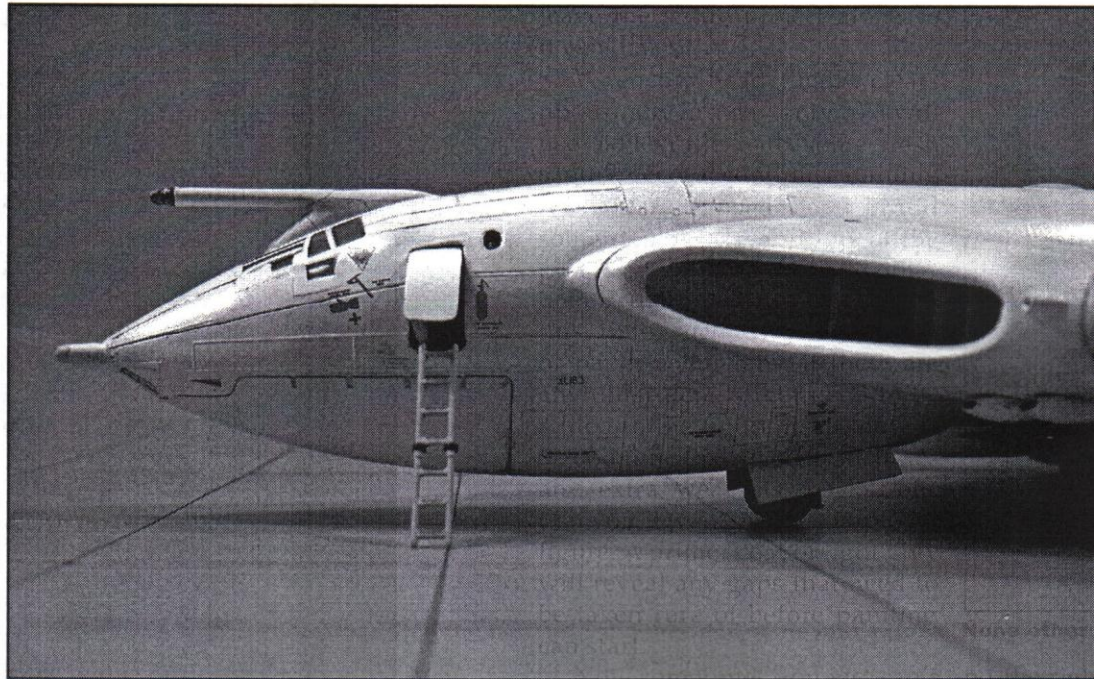
Kent McClure has been building models since 1961 and has been a member of SVSM since 1980. Kent's interests include 1:43 scale race cars, small scale armor and aircraft, and of course anime based or TV/movie style science fiction. If it's weird looking, Kent would probably like it.

Modifying a Victor K2 tanker to nuke bomber

Continued from page 1

molded in light gray styrene instead of those hideous dark green and brown Matchbox colors. The basic shape and lines of the plane are fairly accurate. The worst part of the kit are the terrible fit and the raised panel lines, but these are typical for models of this vintage. Most of the modifications were to convert the tanker back to the bomber configuration. Simply leaving off the tanker stuff such as the refueling pods gets you most of the way there. The most difficult part is the removal of the central refueling station in the lower fuselage since there is a large dome to cut-out. However, the good news is that you have to cut into the

lower fuselage anyway to mount the Bluesteel missile. The Bluesteel was so large that it didn't fit into the cavernous bomb-bays of the Victor (or even the later Vulcan) and so was slung under the fuselage in a semi-recessed cradle. The really, really good news is that the 1/72 Airfix Vulcan kit



One of the worst fit problems was with the canopy. The canopy had relaxed after molding and was not as curved as the fuselage. Andy's solution was to glue the canopy to the fuselage with epoxy and then sand everything to fit.

(909002) has both a Bluesteel and a recessed cradle option for the bomb bay. Cool – no scratchbuilding! I didn't bother with the wing lengthening since I would only have to add 1/4" to each wing, and this would require having to repair all the raised panel lines in that area. So I took the easy path and to hell with Thoreau

... The fit issues in this kit were plentiful. Each wing is separated into four pieces, and while the upper and lower halves mate well, the alignment between the inner and outer wing panels was pretty bad. The inner wing sections mate with huge recesses in the fuselage, and one slipped in like a hot knife into butter whereas the other had to be hacked around for what seemed like days to get it to fit. Of course after all the glue had dried there were massive gaps everywhere that required filling. And this is where the real nightmare of raised panel lines comes in. Sure, they're not as accurate as scribed lines but once painted and

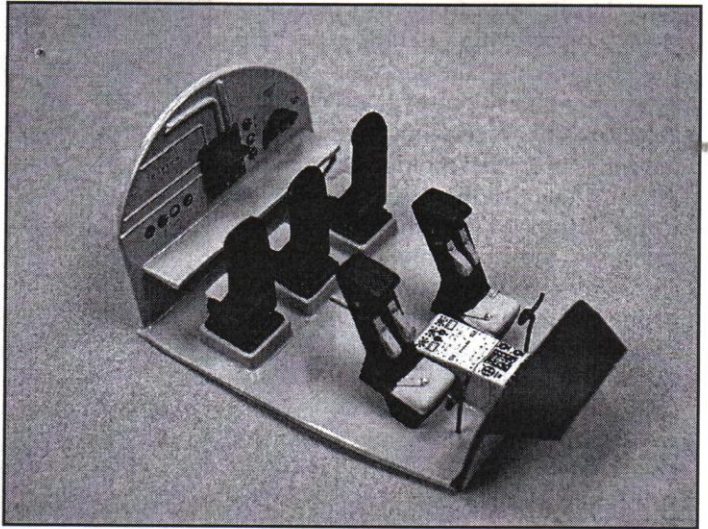


Andy had difficulty finding low visibility decals in the right size and pattern so he made his own using Adobe Photoshop. He also scanned the kit serial numbers and changed their color to baby blue and then printed them on SuperCal decal paper.

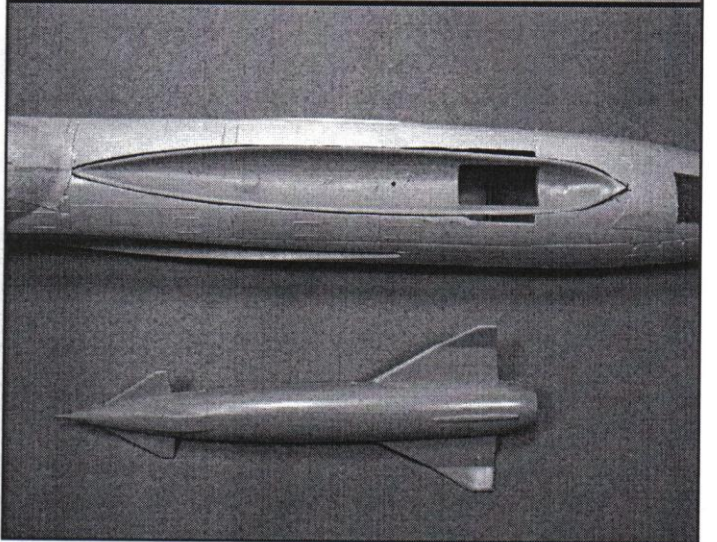
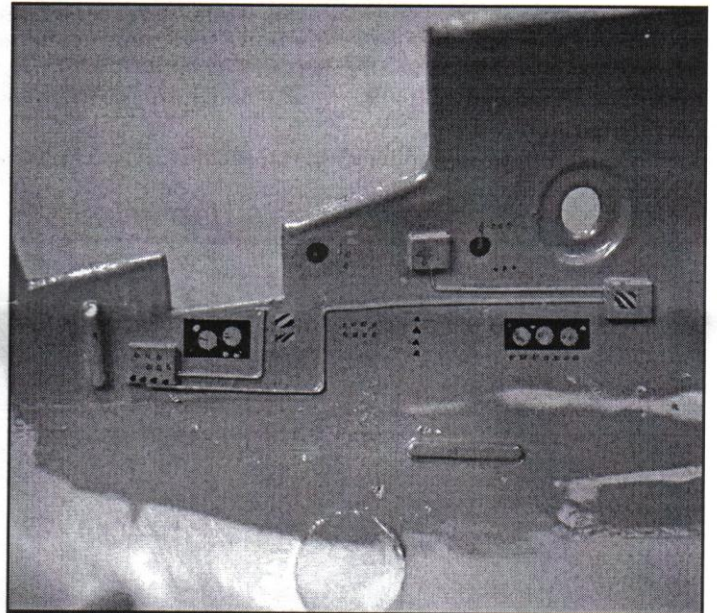
weathered they don't look too bad, except where you've had to putty and sand. And the only thing that looks worse than raised panel lines is discontinuous raised panel lines around joints! So you are either faced with the daunting task of rescribing every single panel line, or ignoring it. I took the middle ground. I rescribed the panel lines where I had filled and sanded, and left the other raised lines alone. If you are artful (or display your model in a really dark hall) you can get away with it.

Other parts that had major fit issues were the empanage (that's the tail, fellas), the underwing fuel tanks and the canopy. The canopy is the worst to deal with because it involves a clear part. The problem is the canopy has relaxed after molding, so has less curvature than the fuselage. This can be corrected with strong glue (which risks fogging the clear plastic), by using mounting pegs or by bending the canopy to the right shape. While it is easy to bend opaque parts in hot water, I was afraid that this process would put a myriad of hairline cracks in the glass which would be visible, so I decided not to do that. My solution was to glue the canopy section to the finished fuselage with epoxy and then sand everything to fit. This method is made easier by the fact that none of the clear regions are adjacent to the fuselage. The Victor has a bunch of tiny windows and less than 50% of the molded canopy remains clear. This idea was only partially successful since on one of my puttying/sanding phases I sanded through the epoxy and a gap opened up. This was fixed by applying tiny amounts of superglue to those cracks. Fogging issues with the superglue were minimized since the amount applied was small, and I had used automotive polish on the inside of the canopy prior to assembly (yeah, this actually works, I have used it successfully on many occasions. It turns out that the fogging you get with superglue is a reaction between the fumes and the plastic, so if you hide the plastic under a layer of polish, there is no reaction). The polish also helps to remove small blemishes and scratches in the plastic, as well as keeping dust from clinging so easily.

Of course, like most plane models, you have to finish the cockpit and detail the inside fuselage before you glue the fuselage halves together. This always amazes my friends who build car models – "how come you've been working on that for 6 weeks and it's still in pieces?" As already mentioned, the Victor has lots of tiny windows, and most of the cockpit is obscured, however that didn't stop me from detailing as much as I could. The basic shapes are provided in the kit – the control panel, a console, five seats for the crew, and even two control yokes. However, the three rearward facing seats for the navigator and flight engineers just face a blank bulkhead, so I thought this was an area that called out for detail. I fashioned a shelf from sheet styrene with several triangular support brackets from wire. I made several large CRT panels with blackout hoods from plastic tube and made partially unrolled flight maps from paper colored with pencils. I added paper belts with painted buckles to all five seats. I also added lots of wiring conduit and junction boxes on the walls from scrap plastic and wire. The control panel and console instruments are all provided on the decal sheet and I painted over these with clear flat and then picked out each dial face with gloss clear. The control yokes were a little clunky and out of scale, so I



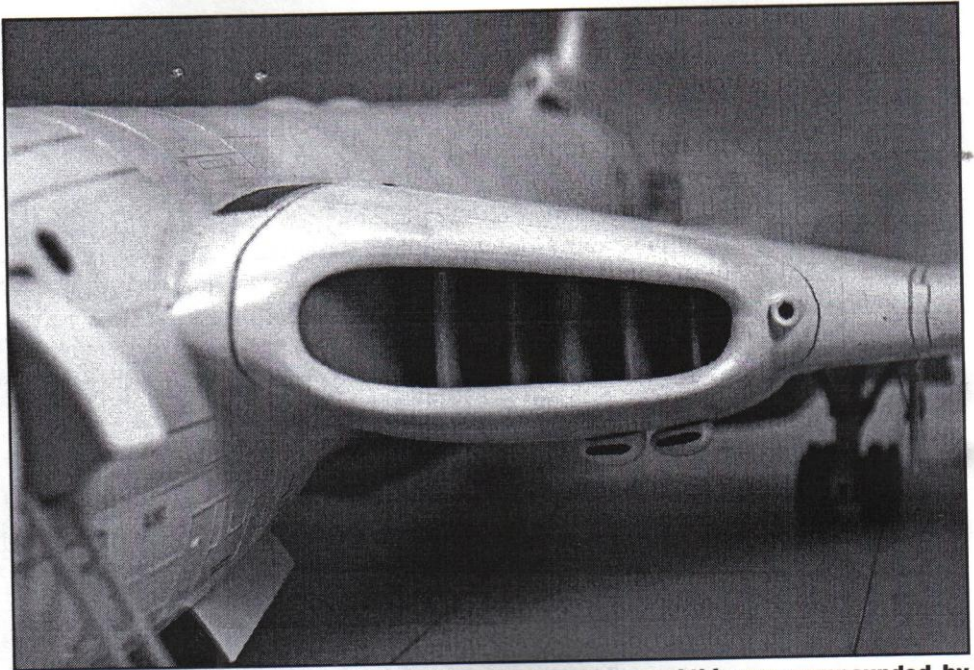
Although most of the cockpit would be obscured, Andy did quite a bit of detailing and scratch building. He added the shelf, support brackets, several large CRTs with blackout hoods, partially unrolled flight maps, belts and more.



Andy removed the central refueling station and replaced it with the Bluesteel bomb and recessed cradle from the Airfix Vulcan kit which lessened the amount of scratch-building necessary.

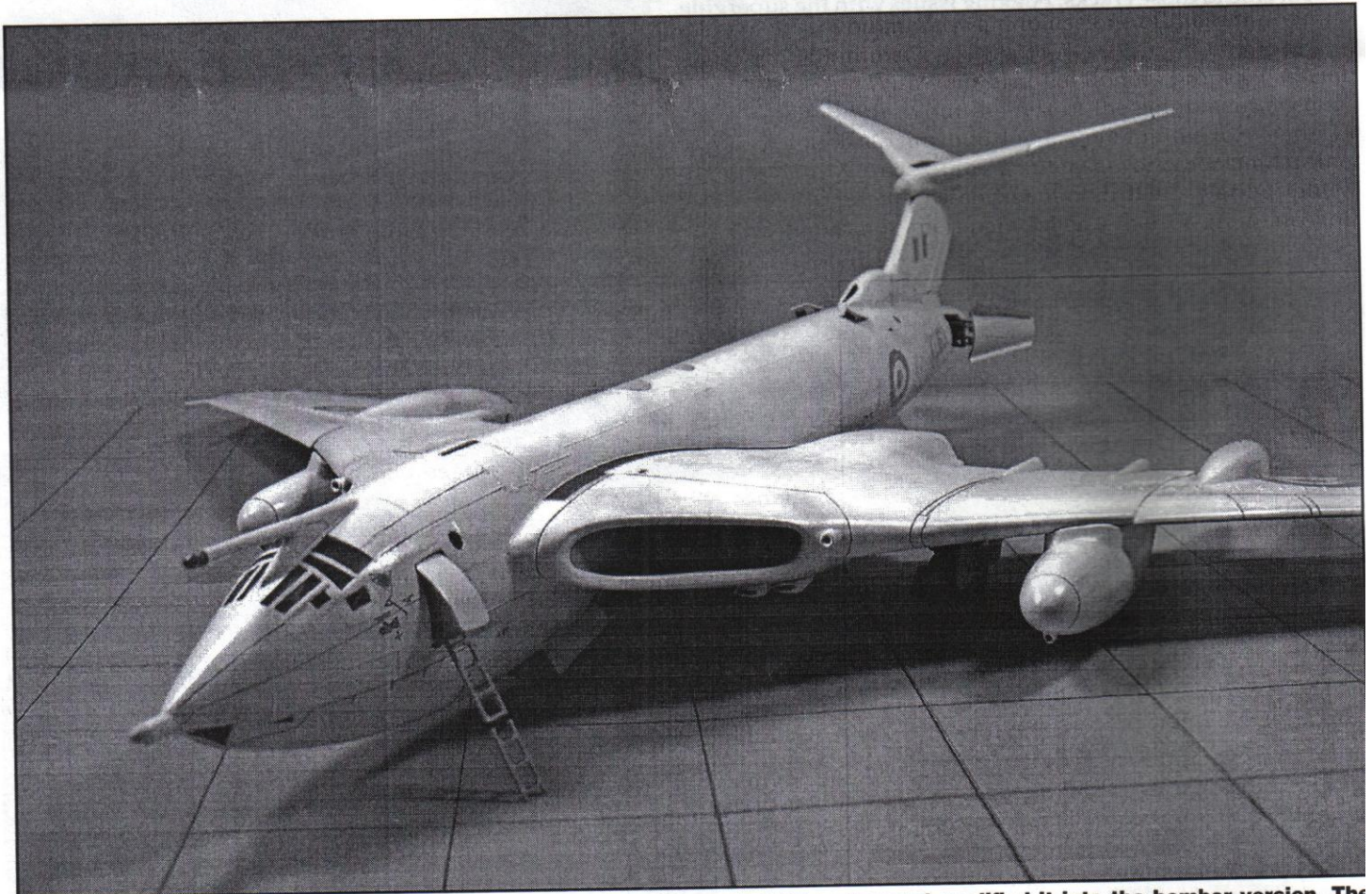
scratchbuilt a pair from wire. Needless to say, most of this detail, especially the engineering console is not visible now, but at least I know it's there. The large cockpit access door, along with a ladder, is provided molded open in the kit, and usually this provides a peek into the interior, but the door hinges from the top and only opens about 45 degrees, so there is no way to look inside from this angle. And of course I wasn't smart enough to work all this out before I detailed the interior...

Did I say the canopy was the worst fit? Well, I take that back. The absolutely worst fit on this kit is the splitter vanes in the intakes. The intakes are cavernous and provide a really good view of about half a dozen splitter vanes which are cut in half horizontally between the upper and lower wing halves. It looks like each wing half was designed by a different person as the vanes don't align left and right, nor do they meet in the middle! It would be difficult to scratchbuild replacements since the intakes expand inwards from a small frontal opening. If only Seamless Suckers made resin intakes for this model they would have had a



The large intake vanes were another difficult fit problem and this was compounded by their conspicuous size. Andy used lots of putty and long thin tools to fix the seams.

dedicated customer. So the only thing I could do was glue everything together and then apply putty to all the gaps with long, skinny flat tools. After three or four puttying/sanding cycles I had all the splitters lined up and connected. To



Andy used the Revell of Germany re-release of the old Matchbox 1/72 K2 tanker and modified it into the bomber version. The model has the correct shape but the fit of the kit is terrible and has raised panel lines.

complicate the situation, there are some nice engine intake fans that also must be installed prior to joining the wing halves. They prevent the "see-through" look, but are a pain since they have to be painted first, and then you have to be careful not to fill them with paint or putty and not scrape them with your sanding tools when working on the splitter vanes. The presence of the fans also made me brush paint the splitter vanes and intake area since I couldn't think of an easy way to mask the fans prior to spray painting. I did get a ton of sanding dust buried in the fans, but found I could wash it out with water and a bottle brush without too much trouble. Yes, the intakes were definitely worse than the canopy. In hindsight, I should have made some big red intake covers instead....

As mentioned before, the only modification to the kit was removing the lower refueling cupola and inserting the cradle for the Bluesteel from the Vulcan kit. After the Victor fuselage halves were glued to-

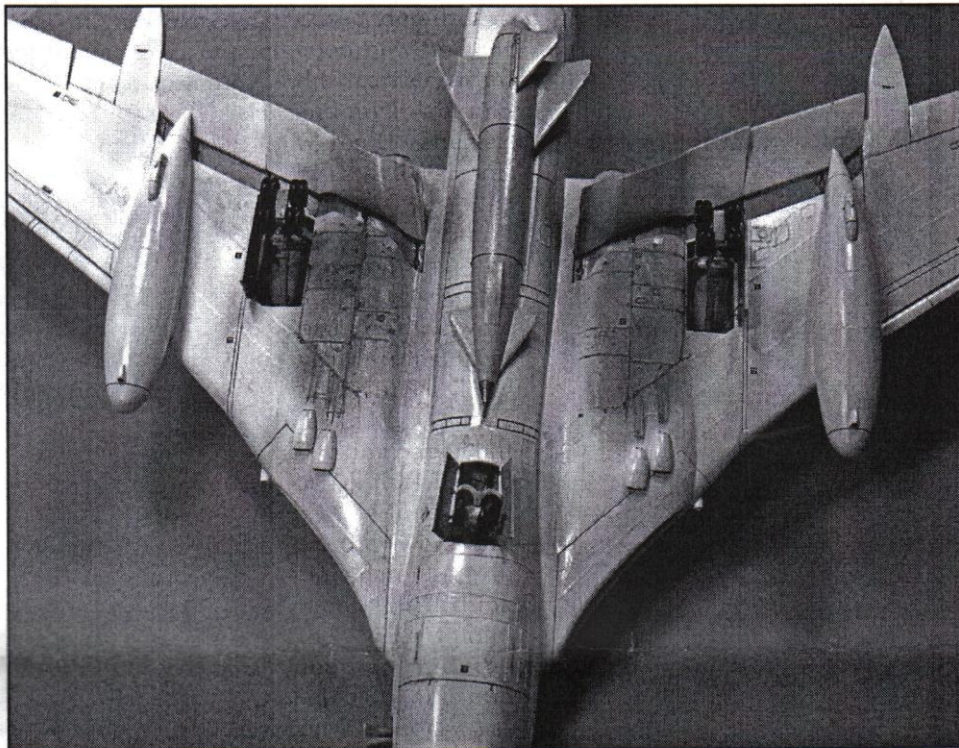
gether I made a cut-out to accept the Vulcan cradle. By careful measuring and cutting I minimized the amount of putty I needed to fill gaps, and the Vulcan piece fits the Victor fuselage like it was made for it. The assembly of the landing gear was straightforward and it wasn't a problem to give the plane the right stance. I detailed the wheel wells with wire for hydraulic lines.

The color scheme on the plane is dead simple and paint everything outside white. Paint everything inside Light Aircraft Gray. I painted Tamiya Bright White over Plastikote white primer (automotive). For the light aircraft gray I used Humbrol 41 - this went in the cockpit, the intakes and the wheel wells. The wheels were painted with Testors steel and the tires were painted with Gunze Tire Rubber.

I couldn't find low visibility decals in the right size and pattern for this plane so I made my own using Photoshop. Luckily British markings are very easy - three concentric circles and three rectangles for the fin. I played around with the colors until I had the right shade of pink and baby blue. The serial numbers on these planes were baby blue as well instead of the black used on camouflaged planes, so I took the kit decals, scanned them into my computer and changed their color to baby blue using Photoshop. I printed the de-

cals on my inkjet at 300dpi using the SuperCal system with clear backing paper. Since I can't print white with my printer I just left the white areas blank and let the white paint show through. This was my first time using this decal kit and I just followed the manufacturers instructions, and everything worked out fine first time. The kit also comes with a clear coat that is lacquer based. I applied two thin coats, 20 minutes apart. My only complaint is that the clear backing is kind of thick and I had to use Microset to get them

to conform to the raised detail. The good news is that the carrier film, and my inkjet ink, weren't affected by the decal solvent. I was also very lucky that I was putting the decals over white paint as they were very translucent as printed. They looked fine on the backing paper, but as soon as I lifted them off I could see they were very transparent. In hind sight I think the way Photoshop produced the baby blue and pink shades was to leave lots of white pixels (the backing paper color) in between the



The landing gear was one area that went together easily. Andy added hydraulic lines to the wheel wells. He painted the whole exterior Tamiya Bright White over Plastikote white primer.

blue and red pixels, so in reality my decals are really red and blue swiss cheese. But since the plane is white, everything turned out fine. The rest of the warning label decals (ejector seat, no walkway, tie-down, etc..) came from the kit decals.

After the decals had cured, I weathered the plane with pastels and a thinned black wash. The Rolls Royce engines were very sooty, like those in the B-52, and after several flights the underside of these white planes around the wing roots got very dirty indeed.

Even though this plane was definitely not a quick build, it didn't require a lot of scratchbuilding to look right. While there was more puttying and sanding than I am used to for a plane model, there was nothing terribly complicated about it, and all that was required was patience. I am very happy with the finished results and now I have a really cool V-bomber in my aeroplane collection.

Andy Kellock began modeling in 1965. He joined IPMS/Australia in 1977 and joined SVSM in 2000. Andy's modeling interests include cars from the 50s, 60s and 70s as well as aircraft from the period between World War II and Vietnam.

NOVEMBER MINUTES

At the November meeting, we were given a short refresher on the process used for the gift exchange, which is coming up at the December meeting (see elsewhere in this issue). Also, it was revealed that in March, we'll have a special contest called "Eight is Enough;" the entries must be models with eight or fewer parts! Mark Schynert also filled us in on the special award for the Fremont contest approaching on May 20; the theme will be "Never a Shot in Anger," giving you an opportunity to build all those Saabs, F-89s, atomic cannons and other subjects that served during times of relative peace.

In model talk... Frank Babbitt is taking on Italeri's old and none-too-detailed 1:72 Ju 86, which he says has a lot of fit problems. Frank added a shim to the canopy, added detail to the cockpit, and has done a lot of sanding and re-scribing. Paul Bishop added a Cutting Edge cockpit and cockpit placards from Eduard to his 1:32 Academy F/A-18C Hornet. He applied decals from Two-Bobs, and did some post-decal weathering with his airbrush, although he's not yet sure whether he likes how it came out or not. Jared Bishop put two weeks of hard work into his Hasegawa F-16, which he says is a great model for the price. Jared

said the decals were tough enough to withstand some rough handling, an advantage for him on this particular build. Steve Travis' journey into the unsettling new world (for him) of airplane models has taken him to the ICM Yak-9D, which he says will be his final ICM kit. The model survived a sudden stop in the car, although Steve had to replace some of the smaller bits. Vladimir Yakubov's three 1:72 armor pieces - a French FCM-36, a conversion of the BAI Soviet armored car from a BA-3 kit, and a T-30 conversion based on the T-40 kit from Planet Models - are making halting progress as he removes and replaces countless parts. Vladimir took a break from these frustrating models to build two JAG Models 1:700 Skipjack-class submarines, one depicted at speed on the surface and the other as it would have appeared after breaking through the polar ice. Vladimir found a kit of the MiG-13, a subject he tried to scratchbuild a few years ago, and is making short work of the resin model. He's also looking forward to building ICM's new I-5 prototype in 1:48. Jim Lund displayed his 1:72 Gene Hooker vacuformed C-133, which he built as a Travis AFB-based example. Back in the days when this came out, Jim said, the plastic was so thin you had to fill it with balsa or foam to give it sufficient structural strength.

Braulio Escoto's Revell 1:72 F-89D was finished as an example flown from Thule AFB in Iceland during the 1950s. Ken Miller showed off his new Academy DC-8, and his finished Academy DC-6 firebomber, which he was building for October's contest, arrived complete but just a few weeks late. Gabriel Lee's been busy with his own 1:144 airliner, an Airfix DC-10-30 in the colors of Venezuela's state airline. He got the decals for the model from Hannants. Laramie Wright's late Tiger comes from the AFV Club kit; he applied zimmerit to the model using putty and Tamiya's photoetched "rakes," with the occasional help of a flat-head screwdriver. He made a resin copy of the DML kit's engine to put inside the rather empty engine compartment. Laramie's also trying to finish the Tamiya Pz. IVD before the lure of the newer Panzer IV kits gets to him. He replaced the wheels with Modelkasten examples, redid all the stowage with Tamiya stuff, and replaced the supplemental armor with sheet styrene. Also late for last month's contest was Laramie's Hasegawa 1:72 F-104; he hated the way the front and back halves joined on this model. Also in 1:72 was Laramie's Revell of Germany P-47D, which features an improved and enlarged cowling.

Laramie sliced the



Brian Soderstrum's won Model of the Month with his little yellow station wagon and its associated trailer.

cowling in half and inserted a .040 spacer to give it a proper shape. Chris Hughes is having an easy time of it with DML's T-34 Model 1940, but to make it more difficult he's going to add the photoetched details from DML's Model 1941 kit. Chris is also progressing on his Hasegawa 1:72 Sd.Kfz. 234/2 Puma. Mark Schynert has built a very effective test article for his resin flying boat beaching cradle: a Revell of Germany Bv 222. Mark says the model fits beautifully and is wonderful to work on, aside from a few small sink marks. Bill Abbott's AMT F7F-3N fuselage was built with the aid of his wife and son during Bill's birthday party. Chris Bucholtz has a 1:72 Tamiya P-47D bubble-top built, rescribed and ready for paint, and he also has an Aires R-2800 engine built and ready to be installed into the Jug. Chris also added some brass parts to Academy's 1:72 GMC CCKW 2 1/2 ton truck, and he's painted the chassis but he's suffering "wheel fatigue" after having to paint 11 wheels and tires. The Glenn L. Martin Museum in Baltimore sent Chris five photos of the bombardier's position on the Martin Maryland, so Chris says he'll have a much easier time building an accurate rendition from the Azur 1:72 kit. Shervin Shembayati is building a pair of Esci 1:72 F-104 Starfighters in Tiger Meet Markings; the kits are

not as good as the Hasegawa kits, he says, but they fit together reasonably well. He's using Tombo multi glue to affix masks to the planes, which will represent examples from Belgium and Canada. Shervin's also working on Revell's 1:72 Fw 190A-8, which has the unfortunate feature of a rear canopy deck molded to the fuselage, which forces you to build it closed unless you replace the canopy. Shervin had a couple of fit problems with Academy's 1:72 P-39Q Airacobra, particularly around the canopy. Shervin finished it with Model Master white, Tamiya acrylic yellow and Gunze Sangyo olive drab and neutral gray. Kent McClure is building Mitsuwa's 1:144 SBD Dauntless and Ju 87, both of which are "very funky." He's also converted a Crown 1:144 B-26 into a JN-1 Navy target tug, employing a scratchbuilt smaller vertical fin, and he's dug up conversion kits for the Crown 1:144 B-24J that will allow him to build a PB4Y-1 or a B-24D. Greg Plummer got a great-looking finish on his Aoshima Honda Accord wagon by spraying Tamiya Dark Blue Pearl right over the black plastic. He used radome tan or a similar military color for the interior. Eric McClure has spent two years on his "quick-build" Sherman, adding RHPS tracks and making new periscope guards from brass rod. Terry New-

bern likes the detail in DML's BMP-1, but he complains that the turret-to-hull fit is pretty sloppy. Also, the tank has a crewman who is Billy Barty-sized compared to the AFV. Ron Wergin built Tamiya's 1:48 Stug. IV, and he included Tamiya's figure to lend it some perspective. Ron also built Tamiya's 1:35 initial version of the Tiger and finished it with Mig pastels and Tamiya thin-

ner. Ron says he could have used regular pastel chalk and alcohol, but he felt gratified by spending the extra money. Mark McDonald stuck together his DML Hetzer, and he's added a Moskit muffler and a set of Fruimodellismo tracks to give the little hunter the proper footing. Bill Ferrante says Revell of Germany's 1:144 Hawker Hunter fits beautifully, and he says Mania's much-older Ki-15 does as well. Bill's building the Ki-15 as the civilian prototype "Kamikaze," and he is floored by the fact that such an old kit has great fit and engraved panel lines. Cliff Kranz built Revell's old box-scale F-111 as an FB-111 by modifying the intakes and using the longer Navy-style wings, then finishing it off in a gull gray-over-white scheme. Brian Soderstrum had never built a Lindberg kit except for a Jeep Cherokee he'd

done several years ago, so he was dubious about the 1966 Chevelle Super Sport kit he picked up a few months ago. Even so, the model came out very well, wearing a finish of British metallic green. Nick Moran's Union Pacific SD40-2 locomotive in HO scale won a bronze at the Irish Nationals, and it actually runs, if that's your thing. Nick's locomotive depicts one of the examples painted up in desert camouflage to commemorate Desert Storm, with the names of all of Union Pacific's called-up reservists painted on the sides. The decals came from Microscale, and Nick added lots of after-

market details to the locomotive. And the model of the month goes to... Brian Soderstrum's little yellow station wagon and its associated trailer. Brian built the model "box stock," he said, but he also added engine wiring and scratchbuilt the trailer from left-over parts from other kits.



Frank's payola pays off. After being chosen in the November raffle, Frank helps Greg "choose" the next "winner."

CONTEST CALENDAR

January 29, 2006: IPMS/San Diego presents the **San Diego Model Expo '06 Model Contest and Vendor Fair** at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. For more information, e-mail Jose Gonzalez at jgonzalez42@cox.net phone him at (760) 430-3005, or visit the club's Web site at www.ipmssd.org.

February 26, 2006: **Silicon Valley Scale Modelers** presents their **14th Annual Kickoff Classic** at Napredak Hall, 770 Montague Expressway, San Jose, California. This year's theme is "Fast and Furious." For more information, call Chris Bucholtz or e-mail him at bucholtzc@aol.com or check the Web site at www.svsm.org.

March 11, 2006: The **Lt. Alexander Pearson Modelers** present their **2006 Invitational** at the Pearson Air Museum, Vancouver, Washington. For more information, visit their Website at www.angelfire.com/wa3/ipmspearsonmodelers.

April 22, 2006: **IPMS/Seattle** presents its annual **Spring Show** at the Renton Community Center, 1715 Maple Valley Highway, Renton, Washington. For more information, contact Terry Moore at (425) 774-6343 or visit <http://www.ipms-seattle.org>.

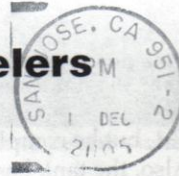
June 3, 2006: The North Olympic Peninsula Modelers Society presents the Peninsula Model Show and Contest 2006 at Fort Warden State Park, Port Townsend, Washington. This year's theme is "Defense of the Sound." For more information, visit their Website at www.nopms.net.



Next meeting:
7:00 p.m.,
Friday,
December 16
at the
Milpitas Public Library
40 N. Milpitas Blvd.
For more information, call the
editor at (408) 307-0672
email: editor@svsm.org



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