

Freedom fighters: Venezuela's Venoms

By Gabriel Lee

Jan. 1, 1958: the city of Caracas, Venezuela awoke to the chatter of machine-guns, cannons and the angry roar of low-flying jets. Because of German and Czechoslovakian immigration after World War I, Venezuela produces some of the best beer in the region, and as a result many of the residents of the city were somewhat hung over—perhaps too much so to realize that the concussion and pounding in their ears was the impending sound of freedom and democracy.

For years Venezuela had suffered under the autocratic rule of General Marcos Perez Jimenez and his dreaded Seguridad Nacional (National Security Service, a Gestapo-like organization that

enforced the will of the dictator remembered with fear to this day by many older Venezuelans). While Fuerza Aerea de Venezuela F-86Fs strafed the Presidential Residence at La Casona, FAV de Havilland *Venoms* shot up the Presidential offices at Miraflores Palace with their 20mm shells.

That particular uprising was short lived. When the aircraft landed, loyalist forces promptly imprisoned the pilots, but the damage was already done to the Perez Jimenez regime. The uprising by the FAV was followed by intense and heated debate among the general population and the military. One by one, squadrons of the FAV went into open rebellion as citizens also openly revolted and took to the streets.

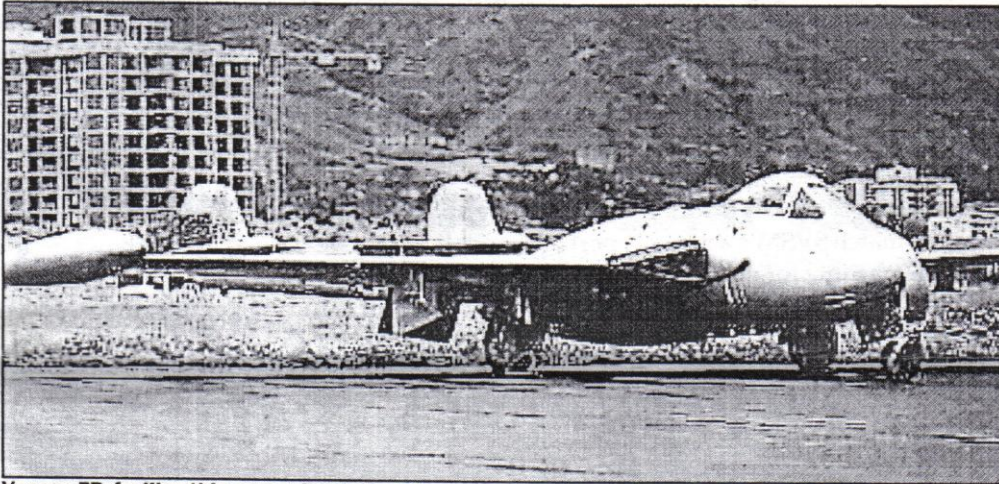
On Jan. 23, 1958 General Marcos Perez Jimenez boarded his C-54 transport and headed to the Dominican Republic and into exile, never to see Venezuela ever again, dying in Spain in the year 2000. Except for a few incidents incited by leftist politicians, Venezuela enjoyed 40 years of democracy from that point on.

The FAV accepted 20 DeHavilland *Venoms* in 1955. From

an engineering point of view, it was an entirely different aircraft from the older DeHavilland *Vampire*, but the FAV treated it as more of an upgrade to its own *Vampires*. With its cannons, missiles and bomb-carrying capability it was a natural for the fighter-bomber role. The fighter role was taken up by the F-86F, with the BAC *Canberra* having the heavy bomber role and the B-25J getting the counter insurgency (COIN) role. This arrangement would remain until the end of the *Venom's*

operational life in the FAV.

The *Venom* was assigned to Escuadron de Caza C-34 Los Indios (34th Fighter Squadron: Indians). Most of the training was air-to-ground combat. The squadron did show off their skills on the Jan. 1, 1958 as described at the beginning of the article. There is film



Venom FB.4s like this one, pictured at Caracas, played a major role in the first uprising against Venezuelan dictator Perez Jimenez.

footage of the DeHavilland *Venom* and its older sibling, the *Vampire*, aggressively zooming in between the twin towers of the Venezuelan Supreme court (the buildings straddle a four-lane street) at approximately fourth or fifth floor level, in paired formation flight.

The *Venom* served as a front line fighter-bomber until 1971 when it was transferred to the Grupo Aereo de Caza No 12 (12th Fighter Group) where it would finish out its service in 1973 before being replaced by the *Mirage III*.

The model used to depict the FAV *Venom* was *Glencoe's* 1:48 DeHavilland *Venom* FB. 4, however experts in model kit genealogy and measurement have informed me that the kit is closer to 1:52 than the advertised 1:48. The author was quite excited coming across this model at San Antonio Hobby Shop: here was a model of an aircraft in Venezuelan military service that did not require a separate purchase of FAV decals! The *Glencoe* models box described the contents as markings for

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EDITOR'S BRIEF

The Kickoff Classic has come and gone, and by almost all measures it was a smashing success. In 2002, our first year at Napredak Hall, 118 modelers entered 343 entries. In 2003, 124 modelers entered 389 entries (6 more modelers and 46 more models than last year). This is a trend that points to the growing reputation of our contest and the general health of scale modeling in Northern California and IPMS/USA Region 9.

Of course, our numbers would not have been so positive if not for the out-of-towners. We had several people up from southern California and down from Oregon, as well as visitors from Europe, Australia and Asia, making our event truly international in its scope.

Another feather in the cap of SVSM is that it has been named Region 9 Chapter of the Year and has been awarded the Hugh Silvas Chapter of the Year Award in the first year this award was given. The award is presented to the club that scores the most points in a system that gives clubs credit for contests, make and takes, model exhibits, charitable efforts, speakers at meetings and other activities that help promote scale modeling and teach its value as a learning tool. In 2002, SVSM hosted a contest, of course, but also put on five make and takes, five model exhibitions, and launched the ongoing Veterans' Hospital Model Drive, which is now giving kits to four California VA Hospitals. Few clubs can match SVSM's active support of scale modeling as a valuable pastime for children of all ages and for students of history. This was a well-deserved award, and now our club will be in the running for the national

Chapter of the Year award, to be presented this July in Oklahoma City.

We also hand out an award for service to SVSM, the Tim Curtis Award, and this year we recognized Steve and Anita Travis, two members of the club who help define SVSM's character as an open, friendly and welcoming community of modelers. The Travises support the contest with generous donations and put in long hours at the raffle table, and they pitch in with the Veteran's Model Drive, but they also help out throughout the year by being examples of modeling's best side. Steve and Anita build what they want because it's fun, not because they want trophies or because they want to whip through easy kits (look at any of Steve's custom cars for evidence that Steve wants to have fun, no matter how much kitbashing he has to do). Their attitudes help attract others to our club, and they add an intangible quality that makes SVSM better just because of their presence.

Finally, thanks go to Mike Burton, Jim Priete and the many volunteers who did the behind the scenes work to make the Kickoff Classic go as well as it did. We had fewer judges than usual, but the organizational efforts of Mike, Jim, Brad Chun and Brian Reynolds, a volunteer from our Santa Rosa sister chapter, enabled us to make short work of the on-paper logistics and deliver the awards on time and to the right people. If you've been to many shows, you know how difficult that can be.

Now, your editor is going to relax and build a model—without a contest deadline looming!

CONTEST CALENDAR

March 14-15, 2003: **The 2003 SCHAMS California Show**, held at the Doubletree Hotel, 100 The City Drive, in Orange, California. For more information, see the website at www.schams.com.

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. More details as they become available.

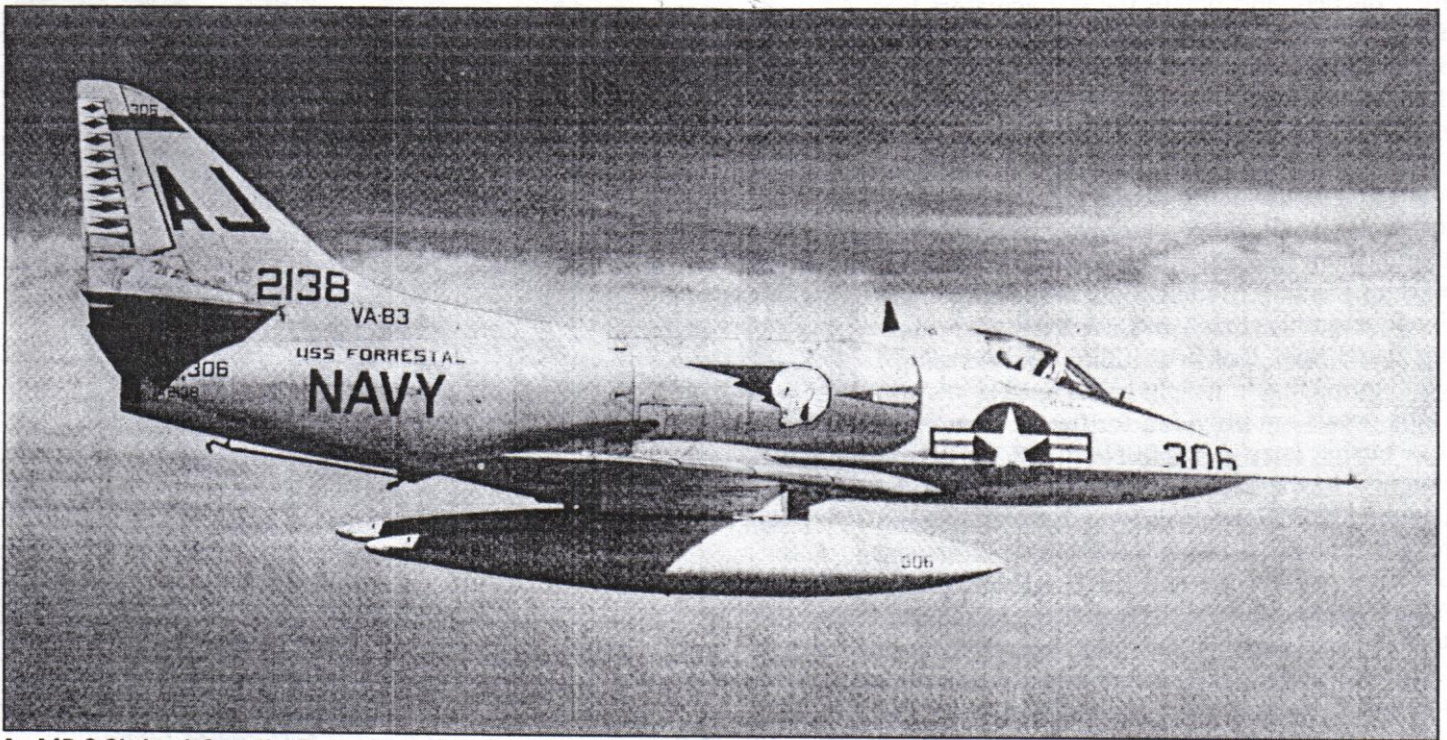
May 30 and 31, 2003: **IPMS/Las Vegas** hosts its **annual contest** at the Imperial Palace Hotel and Casino, 3535 Las Vegas Blvd. South, Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information, call Jim Mitchell at

(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 information, call Pascal Valadier at (503) 282-9371 or visit the website at www.angelfire.com/wa3/ipmspearsonmodeleers/2003%20invitational%20page.htm.

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

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.



An A4D-2 Skyhawk from the Rampagers of VA-83 in flight in 1960. The A4D-2 introduced the ribbed rudder and in-flight refueling probe.

Hasegawa adds B-model 'Scooter' to Skyhawk line

By Bradley D. Chun

After the end of World War II, carrier-borne jet fighter development advanced at a brisk pace, but work on jet ground attack aircraft of similar capabilities did not. This forced the U.S. Navy to rely heavily on the propeller-driven AD *Skyraider* and F4U *Corsair* to carry out ground support and strike missions throughout the Korean War.

While the Navy was fully aware of the necessity for a new aircraft capable of performing these crucial missions, the appearance of the MiG-15 in the Communist arsenal during the conflict required throwing virtually all military design efforts into coming up with a fighter capable of besting the Soviet-designed fighter, leaving very little left in the R&D account for ground attack aircraft.

However, once the urgency of the Korean Conflict diminished, the Navy was ready to move on with its developments in this area. In the early 1950s, this was tasked to the design team at Douglas Aircraft to come up with the next generation of carrier-borne ground attack aircraft.

Douglas, utilizing the latest and newest in light aircraft design technology, came up with a proposal for a small jet weighing in at a mere 6.8 tons, and with a wingspan of 27 feet 6 inches. Douglas was awarded with the Navy contract, and what has become known as the A-4 *Skyhawk*, "Heinemann's Hot Rod," "Bantam Bomber," "Tinker Toy," or "Scooter" made its maiden flight on June 22, 1954.

Ed Heinemann's design team emphasized rigid control over equipment weight while using basic structural concepts to build a strong airframe. The result of this was that the A-4 came in at half the maximum weight set forth in the Navy specification.

The A4D-2, or A-4B, was an upgraded version of the earlier A4D-1 (A-4A) model. It featured a J65-W-16A powerplant,

relocated targeting devices, a strengthened rear fuselage, an improved cockpit and a new hydraulically-powered rudder. The A-4B subsequently received an in-flight refueling probe, which gave it unlimited range. A total of 542 AD4-2s were manufactured before Douglas switched to the A-4C. A total of 2,960 *Skyhawks* were built over 26 years until the production line closed in February 1979.

With the previous Hasegawa releases of its other 1:48 "Scooters," the A-4E/F and A-4C, it would only be a matter of time before Hasegawa released an A-4B. The A-4B was released, but apparently in limited numbers, so if you want one, get it now.

So what comes in the kit? Well, for those who have the previous releases, it won't be a surprise to find nine light gray injection molded sprues, one clear sprue, a decal sheet, and instruction sheet.

As with the previous releases, Hasegawa has included much of the same basic or shared parts for this variant. As with the A-4E/F and A-4C kit, sprue A contains the fuselage and fuselage-specific parts, sprue B contains the upper wing and landing gear doors, sprue D contains the lower wing and slats, sprue E contains the cockpit tub and turbine face, sprue F, of which there are two, contains the tailplanes and underwing fuel tanks, sprue G contains the intake, and sprue K contains the nose and instrument panel. Parts that are not specific to the A-4B variant can be relegated to the ever-growing spare parts box for future scratchbuilding and detailing use.

As with the A-4C kit, there is a new sprue for the intake, nose, and instrument panel. Sprue M contains the canopy and windscreen. The unused parts include the avionics hump, *Sidewinder* rails, outer underwing pylons, bent refueling probe, and other fiddly bits. The parts are molded without any flash, but because they are all packaged in one bag, some of the parts

are scratched, and one of the slat actuators was broken. At least the clear sprue is bagged separately. I guess it would be asking too much to bag the sprue separately like some other manufacturers.

The instruction sheet is the typical *Hasegawa* multi-fold instruction sheet. It contains a brief history of the A-4B, 13-step assembly process, parts layout, paint guide/reference, and painting and markings section. Modelers will need to pay attention to assembly steps 4 and 5, as there are numerous panel lines that need filling and "erasing." Don't forget to add weight in the nose.

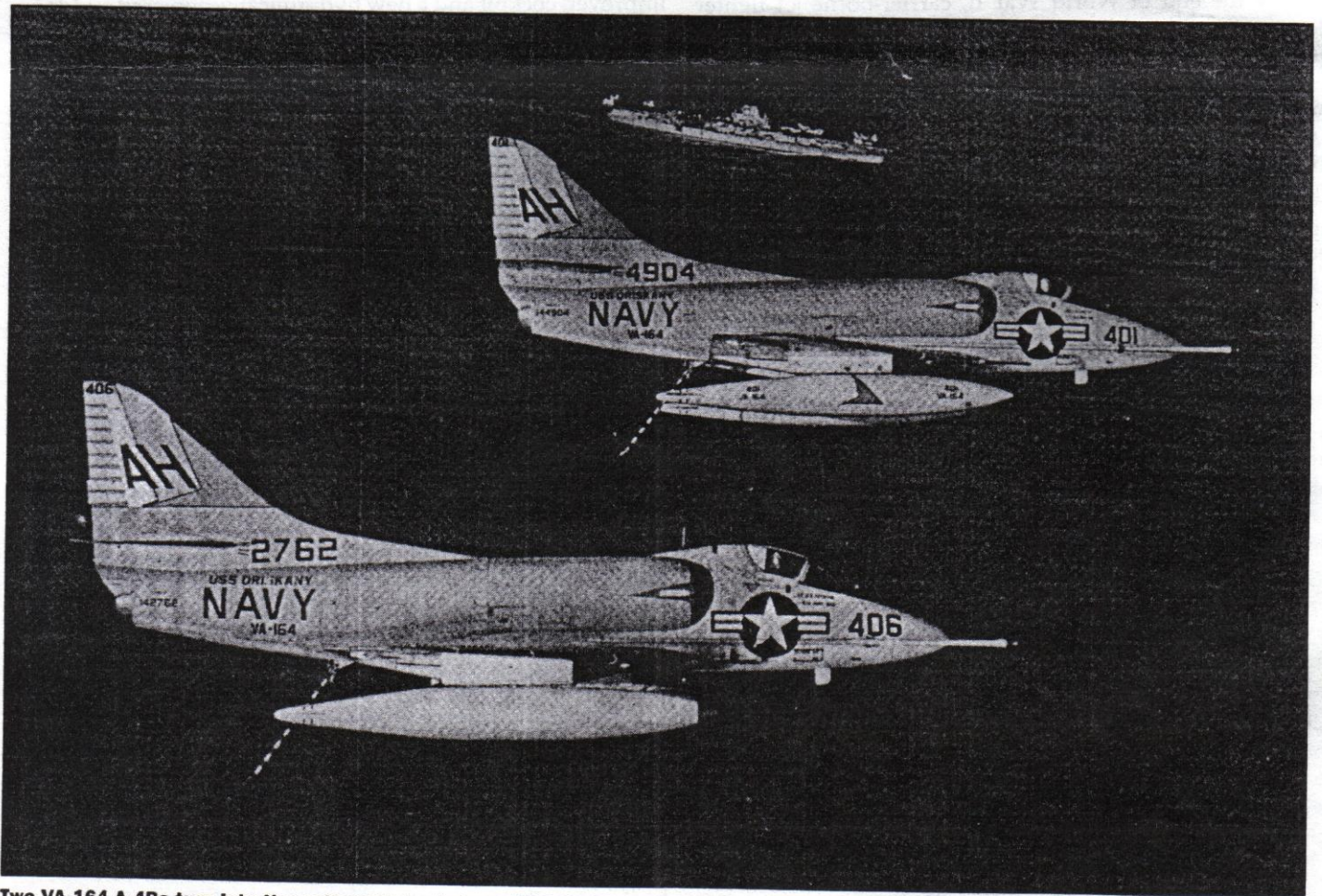
The decals are provided for two versions. The first version is an A-4B, BuNo. 144852, and was assigned to the Blue Hawks of VA-72 and the Commander of Carrier Air Wing 7, and the second version is an A-4B, BuNo. 144954, assigned to the Gladiators of VA-106 and the Commander of Carrier Air Wing 10 aboard the U.S.S. *Essex*. *Hasegawa* has now provided the red areas under the slats and inside of the flaps as decals. Separate number decals are provided for those who will be painting these areas red. *Hasegawa* provided on separated "Navy" markings for the air brakes, so now you won't have to worry about separating the decals and risking tearing them. There are also separate decals for the colored sections for the ribbed rudder for the CAG aircraft.

Now that *Hasegawa* has released the A-4B, A-4C, and A-4E/



The CAG bird from VA-12 in 1958, photographed during a stopover in Yuma, Arizona.

F, one can hope that they will release a late-F, -H, -M, -N, TA-4J, and maybe even the OA-4M. There is a mold part line inside of the fuselage at the rear fuselage section suggesting other future versions. (We could really use a 1:48 TA-4J!) Hopefully an aftermarket company will release a resin T-63 shape or buddy-refueling pod in the near future. I'm not holding my breath though as they are obscure specific items, and one may want to scratch-build these detail items. Maybe I can finally use those *Bullpup* missiles that are in the *Hasegawa* weapons kits.



Two VA-164 A-4Bs turn into the pattern to land aboard U.S.S. *Oriskany* in 1963. The 'Ghostriders' saw much combat over Vietnam.

Accuracy issues can't spoil Revell's 1:72 Bv 222

By Mark Schynert

It can be tough for those among us benighted enough to want to build large World War II flying boats in 1:72. There's a nice *Minicraft* PBY *Catalina*, a surprisingly good *Matchbox Stranraer*, and Italeri's Do 24 is also a fine kit, but after that, you are faced with ancient kits (*Matchbox* Do 18, *Airfix* *Sunderland*, *Supermodel* Bv 138, *Italeri* CANT Z.501, *Hasegawa* H6K3 "Mavis" and H8K2 "Emily"), difficult limited run injection kits (*Mach 2* Do 26 and *PBM* *Mariner*;) or vacuform kits (*Rareplanes* or *Execuform* PB2Y *Coronado*, *Rareplanes* or *Execuform* PBM, *Airframe* Short-Mayo Composite.)

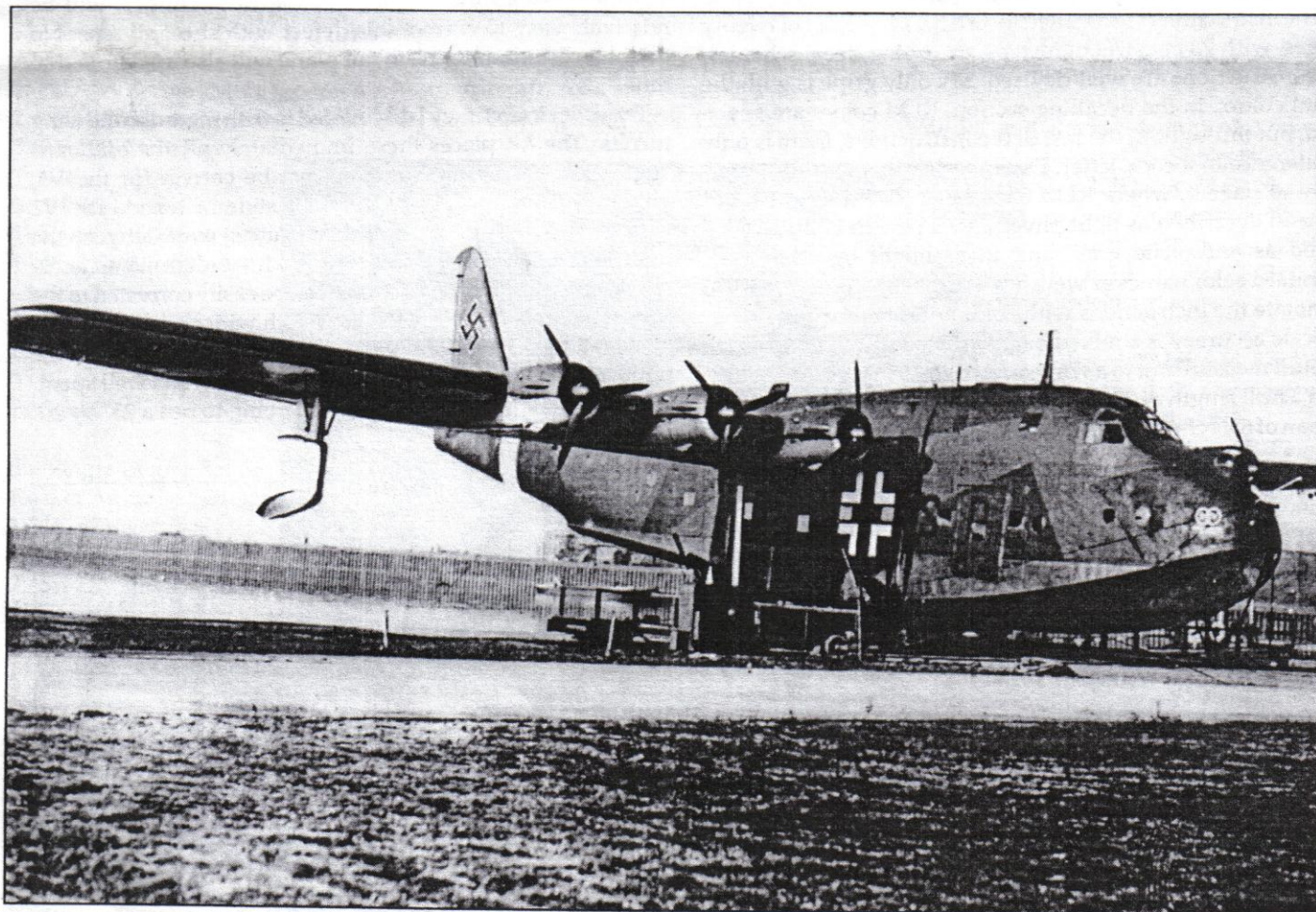
And then *Revell-Germany* comes along with the most improbable addition of all: the Bv 222 "Wiking." This is not only the largest flying boat kit I've ever seen, it's also among the best. Unfortunately, it does have some problems.

The kit is large with good reason. The Bv 222 was huge, grossing 50 tons in normal loaded condition. It carried an 11- to 14-man crew, and boasted six engines, up to nine gun positions, including a couple of turrets halfway out on the wing on many of the completed aircraft, and a range of over 3700 hundred miles. This flying boat was so large that it weighed as much as a *Catalina* and a *Coronado* combined. The 13 completed airframes saw extensive service from mid-1941 in the Mediterranean, North Atlantic, and even in the Arctic, being used primarily as transports, but also in the maritime

reconnaissance role. Five survived to May 1945, two being scuttled by their crews and three being captured by British and American troops.

The BV 222 was produced in essentially two variants; the Bv 222A, represented by the first six airframes and the eighth, was powered by six Bramo 323 radials of 1000-1200 HP. The "C" model was powered by Jumo 207D diesels of 1000 HP each; the seventh and ninth through 13th aircraft were built to this standard. However, within this short production run there were a variety of detail differences for both the "A" and "C," relating to armament, tail plane size, power plant details, and so on. In any event, this kit is labeled as the Bv 222 V-2, the second A-series machine, but *Revell-Germany* has boxed a hybrid among different A-series aircraft. In the end, it represents no one machine, though it will stand as a nice representation of the type overall.

Upon opening the box, I was immediately impressed by the very fine engraved surface detail, which seems reasonably accurate. With so many variations, it's not surprising that some of the engraved detail appears to correspond to different aircraft, but for the most part, things are where they ought to be. The way the kit is designed, it is possible for hatches to be left open to show much of the interior, and the interior engraving is extensive with this in mind. However, most of the lower deck, the cargo area, is bare apart from the surface



Bv 222 out of the water on a beaching assembly for maintenance. Although there weren't many built, they saw service all across Europe.

detail. The cockpit area is adequate as it stands, and provides a good basis for the super detailer; anticipate a photo-etch set for this kit.

The injected transparencies are good. The Bramo single-row radial engines are rendered competently without being spectacular. Likewise, the many small detail parts are done well, considering that styrene is not always the ideal medium for such things as Hohentweil radar arrays. There is no beaching gear in the kit. Altogether, there are in excess of two hundred parts.

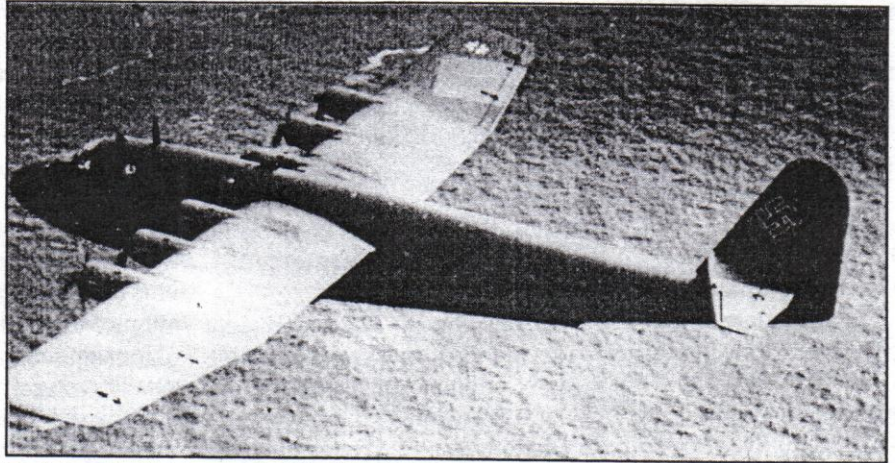
The actual assembly will most likely prove challenging, partially due to sheer size, but also since the decks and bulkheads have to be assembled into a framework before the hull halves are sandwiched around them. If care is not used getting this framework together, you may anticipate problems getting the hull to close properly. That said, the engineering on this kit is very good, including substantial cylindrical spars into the wing roots, very much like those on the prototype.

The decal sheet provides two options for the V-2: an earlier set of markings for service with LTS 222 in the Med, and a later set while with 1/SAGr. 129 on the Biscay coast of France. Decals include instrument panels for the pilots and the flight engineer; these are nicely rendered. The decals appear to be thin, with what seems to be an opaque white.

The instructions are detailed in an 8.5 x 11 booklet of twenty pages, with 73 construction steps, including decal schemes. The instructions are well-devised. My only gripe is with the paint colors; in the decalling section, RLM colors are specified, but throughout the rest of the instructions, there is only a reference to a code letter. Decyphering this requires reference to page 4, where RLM 02 is never listed as such, but instead described as light olive. What I take to be RLM 66 is listed as anthracite gray, and there might be other non-standard color names as well. It will probably be necessary to annotate the instructions with color notes before beginning.

Scale accuracy is a mixed bag. Reduced to 1:72, the Bv 222 should measure out to a wingspan of 25.15 inches (63.888 cm) and a hull length of 20.24 inches (51.4 cm). The box advertises a span of 63.4 cm and a length of 50.3 cm. This would make the

model slightly under scale, say about 1:74 for span and 1:75 for length. However, the wings appear to be right on with 1:72 drawings I have; the fuselage looks to be short to the tune of less than 4mm. Given the size of this beast, I don't consider this a problem. Nevertheless, there is one problem which sticks out like a sore thumb—the tail plane is much too short in span. Granted that the first three aircraft had a shorter-span

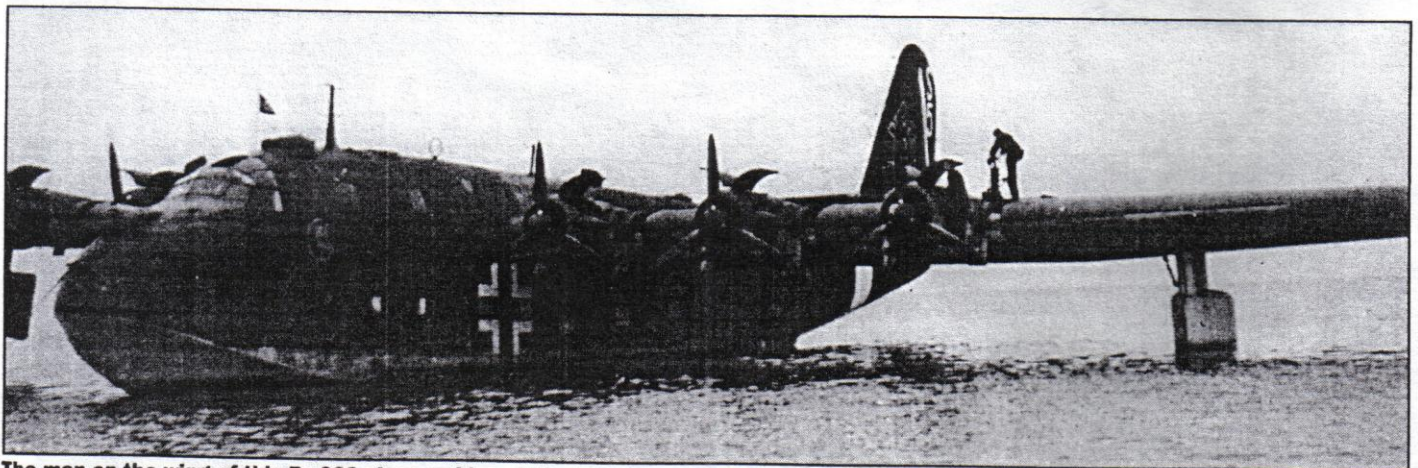


Prototype in flight over the Elbe in 1940. Note the absence of wing turrets.

tail plane than the rest, the one in the kit is shorter still, on the order of half an inch overall. The only good news is that the dimensions are correct from the elevators back to the fuselage, leaving all the shortage at the tips. Thus, it will be relatively easy to correct this defect with sheet styrene. No doubt an aftermarket resin tail plane will also appear in due time.

The other inaccuracy I discovered is with regard to the wing turrets. The kit places these immediately aft the outboard engine nacelles. This would in fact be correct for the V4, although it had a slightly different style of turret. The V2 turrets (and those of most other machines) were between the middle and out board nacelles. The kit won't build an accurate V4 either, since the tail plane can be easily corrected to the V2's tail plane, but the V4's was much wider.

My take is to shrug about the wing turrets, fix the tail plane while grumbling, and otherwise to rejoice on \$35 well spent. The only real question is where I'm going to put a 25" by 20" completed model.



The man on the wing of this Bv 222 gives an idea of the immense size of the plane. Each engine had an integral platform for maintenance.

Winners from the 2003 Kickoff Classic

S1. Single Engine Aircraft, 1:72, U.S. Subjects

1. F4D-1 *Skyray*, David Newman
2. AV-8B *Harrier*, Dan Clover
3. F-86D *Sabre*, Tom Bergfeld

S1A. Single Engine Aircraft, 1:72, Non-U.S.

1. BAC *Strikemaster*, Frank Babbitt
2. Me 163 *Komet*, Steve Alten
3. F-86F *Sabre*, Gabriel Lee

S2. Multi-Engine Jet Aircraft, 1:72

1. Arado E.555, Tom Bergfeld
2. Messerschmitt P.1099, Tom Bergfeld
3. EB-57 *Canberra*, Andy Kellock

S3. Single Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, 1:72

1. F4U-1A *Corsair*, Mike Laxton
2. F4F-4 *Wildcat*, Chris Bucholtz
3. Fw 190, Mike Laxton

S4. Multi-Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, 1:72

1. *Beaufighter* Mk. Vif, Chuck Betz
2. B-25C *Mitchell*, Tom Bergfeld
3. Ki-49 "Helen," Tom Bergfeld

S5. Single Engine Jet or Rocket Aircraft, 1:48

1. He 162 *Volksjager*, Jack Riggat
2. Su-22 "Fitter," Juan Solarzano
3. F4D-1 *Skyray*, Bob Phillips

S6. Multi-Engine Jet Aircraft, 1:48

1. S-3B *Viking*, Masa Narita
2. Me 262, Dan Clover
3. F-4K *Phantom*, Juan Solarzano

S7. Single Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, Allied, 1:48

1. Spitfire Mk. 22, Roy Sutherland
2. P-51D *Mustang*, Joe Fleming
3. SBD-5 *Duuntless*, Tom Trankle

S8. Single Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, Axis and Neutral, 1:48

1. Ki-43 "Oscar," Ken Conner

2. Fw 190D-9, Ken Coner

3. Bf 109E, Joe Fleming

S9. Multi-Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, 1:48, Allied Subjects

1. XF5F-1 *Skyrocket*, Brian Casteel
2. De Havilland *Mosquito*, Mark Wong
3. De Havilland *Mosquito*, Matt Graham

S9A. Multi-Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, 1:48, C-130

1. AC-130 *Hercules*, Ronald Gaut
2. DC-130 *Hercules*, Carl Knoch
3. C-130 "Fat Albert," Bill (lastname not given)

S9B. Multi-Engine Prop or Turboprop Aircraft, 1:48, Axis or Neutral Subjects

1. J1N "Irving," Maurice Saicon
2. Me 110G, Jim Reed
3. Savoia Marchetti S.79, Ron Scholtz

S10. Jet and Rocket Aircraft, 1:32 and larger, U.S. Subjects

1. F-15E *Eagle*, Masa Narita
2. A-10 *Thunderbolt*, Brian Casteel
3. F-14 *Tomcat*, Brian Casteel

S10A. 1:32 Jet and Rocket Aircraft, 1:32 and larger, non-U.S. Subjects

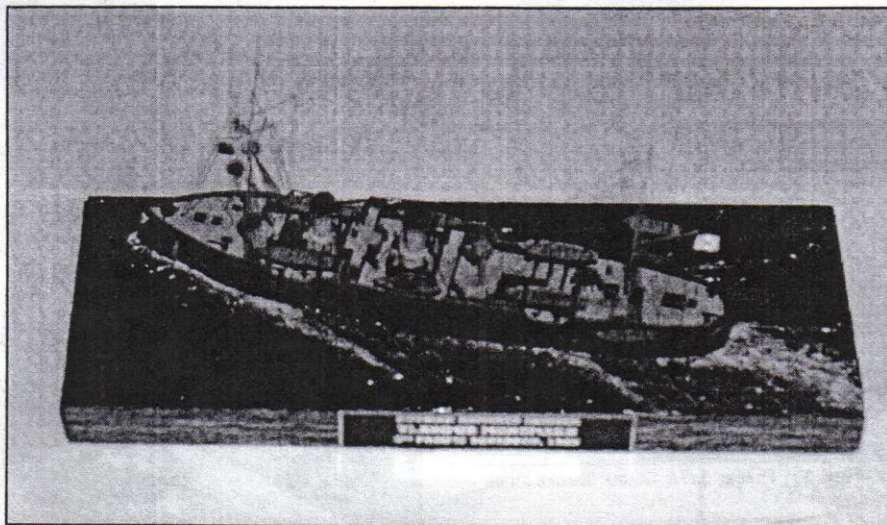
1. F-4E *Phantom II*, Peter Long
2. F-4E *Phantom II*, Paul Stoner
3. MiG-21 Rod Bettencourt

S11. Prop Aircraft, 1:32 and larger

1. Ta 152H, Eric Mark
2. Bf 109G, Jim Reed
3. Bf 109G, Chip Harrison

S12. Biplanes/Fabric and Rigging, Aircraft, All Scales

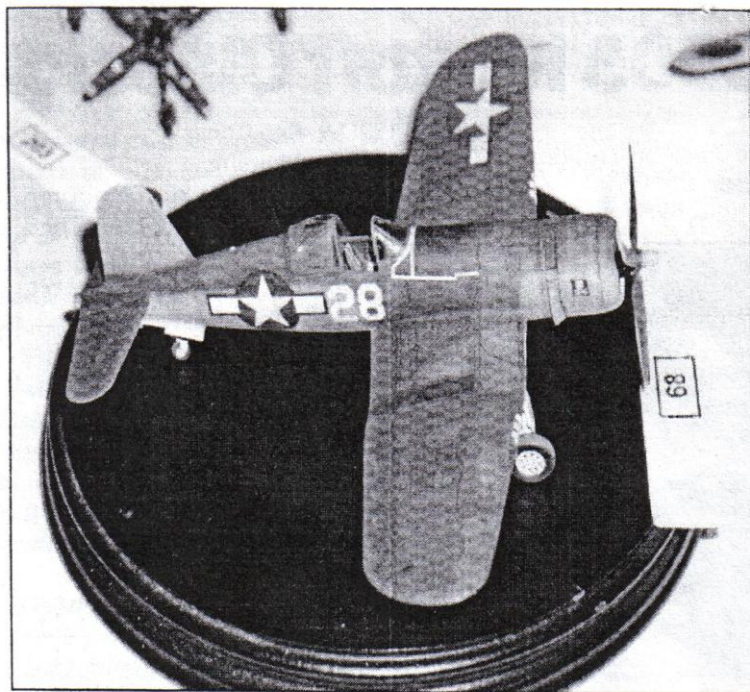
1. Fokker Dr.I, Chuck Betz
2. F3F-1, Kevin Golden
3. SPAD VII, Jim Gordon



Vladimir Yakubov's 1:700 Russian Armored Cruiser *Vladimir Manomaks*. 1st Place: SHIPS, 1:401 and smaller; Winner: Best in Show, Senior



Vladimir Yakubov (center) shows his 1:700 cruisers to (clockwise from top left) Dennis Ybe, Clarence Novak and Jim Gordon.



1:72 F4U-1A Corsair by Mike Laxton. 1st Place: 1:72 SINGLE ENGINE PROP OR TURBOPROP AIRCRAFT

- S13. Rotary Wing Aircraft, all scales
 1. EH-101 *Merlin*, Robin Powell
 2. AH-1S *Cobra*, Steve Alten
 3. MH-6 *Cayuse*, Dave Campbell

- S14. Civil, Sport and Racing, all scales
 1. DC-3, Rodney Williams
 2. "Conquest 1" *Bearcat*, Mike Meek
 3. Lear Model 23, Postoria Aguirre

- S15. Jet, Prop and Rocket Aircraft, 1:144 and smaller
 1. KC-10 *Extender*, Masa Narita
 2. X-38, David Newman
 3. RB-47 *Stratojet*, Mike Burton

- S16. Military Vehicles, Softskin, 1:35 and larger
 1. BA-6, Joe Fleming
 2. Kubelwagen, Joe Fleming
 3. M38A1, Jim Lewis

- S17. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Closed Top, to 1945, 1:35 and larger, Axis and Neutral Subjects
 1. Japanese Type 97, Joe Fleming
 2. Stug III F, Joe Fleming
 3. Jagdpanther, Kevin Gonzales

- S17A. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Closed Top, to 1945, 1:35 and larger, Allied Subjects
 1. Mathilda Mk. II, Joe Fleming
 2. BT-7, Hubert Chan
 3. KV-1, Joe Fleming

- S18. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Closed Top, Post-1945, 1:35 and larger
 1. Challenger, Masa Narita
 2. T-72, Dan Clover
 3. M45 Pershing Howitzer, Jim Lewis

- S19. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Open Top, 1:35 and larger
 1. Bison II, Jack Riggart
 2. M4 Sherman, Jim Lewis
 3. Marder II, Jared Gonzalez

- S20. Towed Artillery and Ancillary Vehicles, 1:35 and larger
 1. 743(r) Tractor with 75mm Howitzer, Joe Fleming
 2. Puppchen, Joe Fleming

- S21. Military Vehicles, all types, 1:48 and smaller
 1. Tiger I, Jack Riggart
 2. M4A1 Sherman, Dave Parks



Four of the seven 1:48 C-130 Hercules brought by modelers from Fresno



EH-101 Merlin HC.1 by Robin Powell. First Place: ROTARY WING AIRCRAFT, ALL SCALES



M4A2 76mm Wet Stowage Sherman by Laramie Wright.

- S26A Automobiles, Competition, Open-Wheel, all scales, non-Formula 1
1. Miller 91, Mike English
 2. 1924 Duesenberg, Mike English
 3. Lola T-93, Thomas Leutzinger

- S27. Automobiles, Competition, Closed-Wheel, all scales
1. 1959 Austin Healy Sprite Mk. I, Bryan Finch
 2. Audi A4, William Bauer
 3. NASCAR Ford Thunderbird, Marv Wong

- S28. Automobiles Specifically Syled as Low Riders, all scales
1. '57 Ford Fairlane, Miguel Murillo
 2. '51 Chevy, Miguel Murillo
 3. '62 Impala, Vincent Rosendo

- S29. Space Vehicles, Fictional (Science Fiction or Fantasy), all scales and types
1. AT-AT, Roy Sutherland
 2. TIE Fighter, Jim Lewis
 3. *Swordfish II*, Greg Plummer

- S30 Space Vehicles, Real, and Missiles, all scales and types
1. X-38, Dave Balderama
 2. V-1, Chris Bucholtz

- S31. Figures, Historical, all scales
1. Cleopatra, Felicia Hicks

3. Mercedes Staff Car, Jim Gordon

- S22. Ships, 1:400 and larger
1. LCVP, Ron Scholtz
 2. S.S. *Oriana*, Tom Bergfeld

- S23. Ships, 1:401 and smaller
1. Russian Armored Cruiser, Vladimir Yakubov
 2. Flower-Class Corvette, Chuck Betz
 3. Russian Armored Cruiser *Bayan*, Vladimir Vakubov

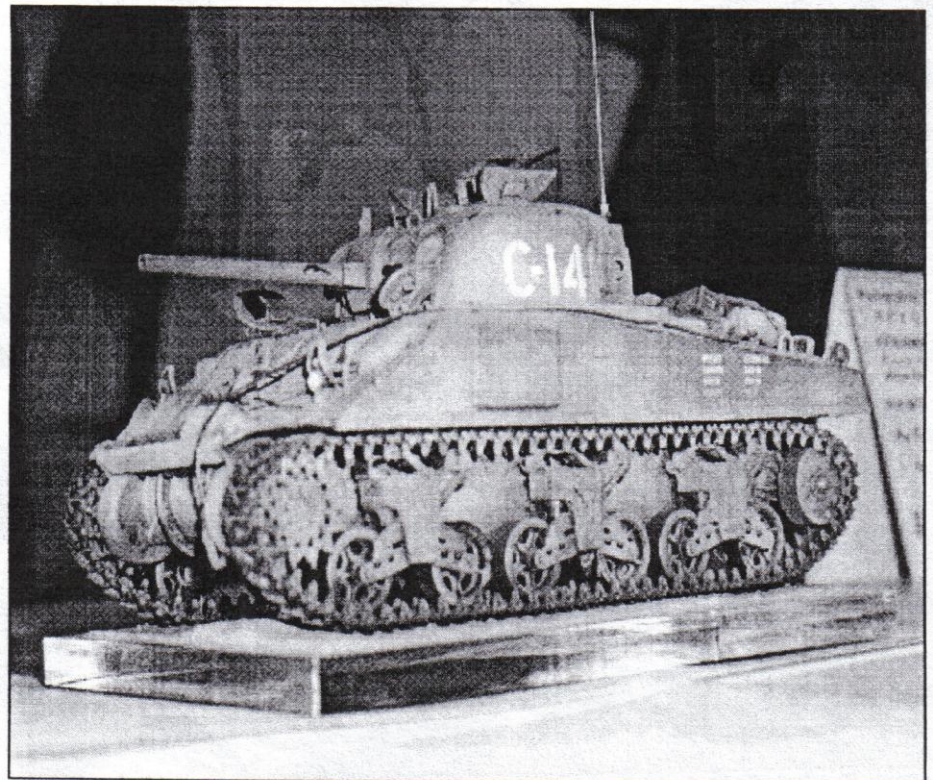
- S23A. Ships, Submarines
1. Japanese Miniature Sub, Steve Munroe
 2. U.S.S. *Ohio*, Jim Gordon
 3. Type XXI U-Boat, Greg Plummer

- S24. Automobiles, Stock, all scales
1. Corvette, Mike Laxton
 2. Porsche 911 Carrera, Mike Laxton
 3. Ford Mustang, Andy Kellock

- S25. Automobiles, Custom, other than low rider style, all scales
1. Ford Galaxy, Oliver Galgani
 2. '51 Chevy, Vincent Rosendo
 3. '49 Mercury, Andy Kellock

- S25A. Automobiles, Custom, Hot Rods, all scales
1. '32 High Boy, Peter Martin
 2. '40 Ford Coupe, Miguel Murillo
 3. '39 Mercedes 540K, Miguel Murillo

- S26. Automobiles, Competition, Open-Wheel, all scales, Formula 1
1. Wolf WR-1, Mike Laxton
 2. Wolf WR-1, Thomas Leutzinger
 3. McLaren MP-4, Thomas Leutzinger



M4 Sherman by Jim Lewis. SECOND PLACE, ARMORED FIGHTING VEHICLES, OPEN TOP, 1:35 AND LARGER.

2. Viking, Patti Ballard
3. Paratrooper, Bill Hessling

S32. Figures, Fantasy and Fiction, all scales

1. Faye Valentine, Brian Sakai
2. Neo Paladin, David Campbell
3. The Forgotten Prisoner, Anita Travis

S33. Out of the Box, all scales, U.S. Subjects

1. P-47D *Thunderbolt*, Eric Mark
2. F-86D *Sabre*, Thang Le
3. F-20 *Tigershark*, Thang Le

S33A. Out of the Box, all scales, non-U.S. Subjects

1. Ju 87, Thang Le
2. Me 262, Thang Le
3. Bf 109, Thang Le

S34. Dioramas, all types and scales

1. Marder and Flak, Dennis Warner
2. After the Battle, Charles Readine
3. Desert Repair, Dave Parks

S35. Hypothetical Vehicles, all scales and



S-3B Viking by Masa Narita. First Place: 1:48 Multi-Engine Jet Aircraft

types

1. Evangelion, Masa Narita
2. Amphibious AFV, Clarence Novak

3. *Corsair V*, Greg Plummer

S36. Miscellaneous

1. Kinkaku, Masa Narita
2. 9-Cylinder Rotary Engine, Greg Plummer
3. Yellowswing Steam Locomotive, Clarence Novak

S37. Collections, all types and scales

1. De Havilland Post-War Aircraft, Robin Powell
2. Rat Rods, Greg Plummer
3. Early Birds, Jim Lund

J1. Junior Aircraft, 1:144 scale

1. Me 262, Rose McMackin
2. P-40N *Warhawk*, Rose McMackin
3. F-15 *Eagle*, Tim Bromegem

J1A. Junior Aircraft, 1:72 and larger

1. TBF *Avenger*, Andrew Haas
2. Ho 229, Eric Haas
3. Su-27 "Flanker," Jeff Reich

J4. Junior Dinosaurs and Figures

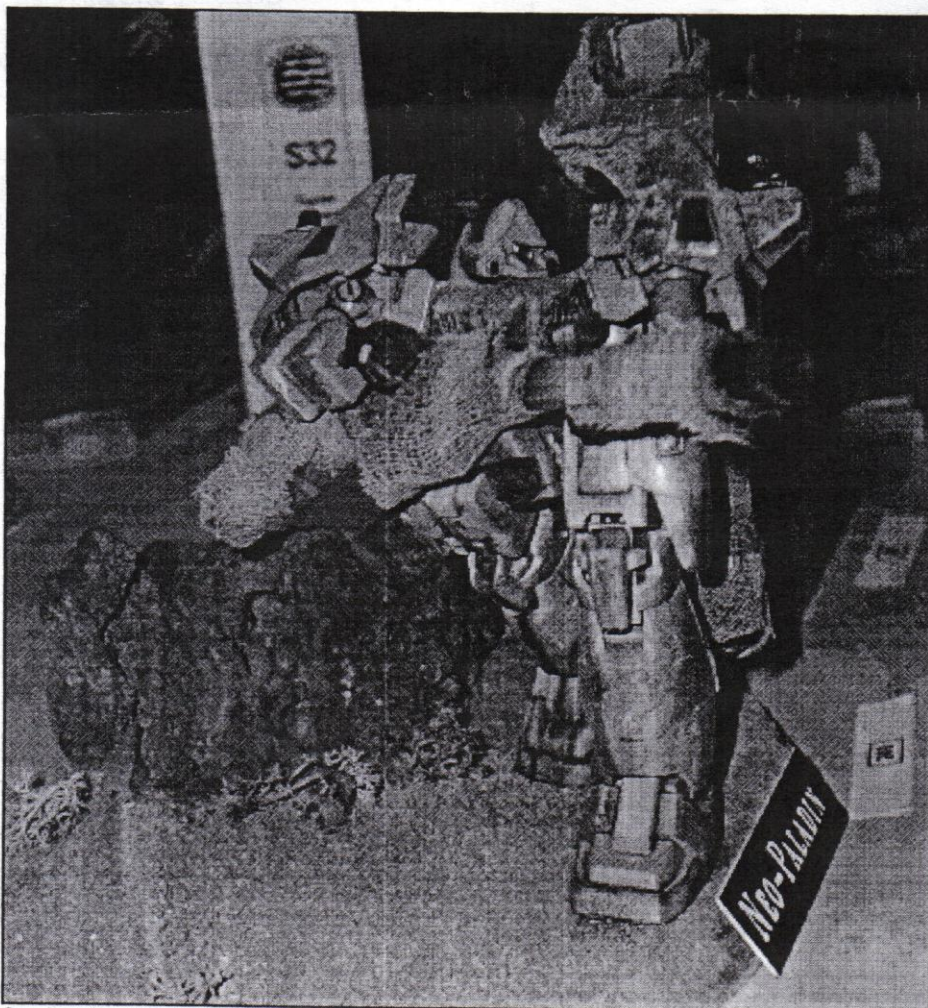
1. Inquisitor, Andrew Haas
2. Jinggaou, Eric Haas

SJ1. Youth Aircraft

1. F-4 *Phantom II*, Benjamin Stoner
2. B-29 *Superfortress*, Aiden McMackin

SJ3. Youth Automobiles

1. '66 Riviera, Claudia Rosendo
2. '50 Chevy, Claudia Rosendo



Gundam Neo-Paladin by David Campbell. Second Place: Figures, Fantasy and Fiction, All Scales

SJ4. Youth Miscellaneous

1. Sandrock, Cooper Sutherland
2. Wing Zero, Cooper Sutherland
3. Hydralisk, Scott Gonzales

SA13 Best Air Racer
Conquest I *Bearcat*, Mike Meek

SA12 Silk Purse Award—Best Model
from Worst Kit
Lear Model 23, Postoria Aguirre

SA11 Best Tank Destroyer
A-10 *Thunderbolt II*, Brian Casteel

SA10 Best Vacuform
Westland *Wyvern*, Robin Powell

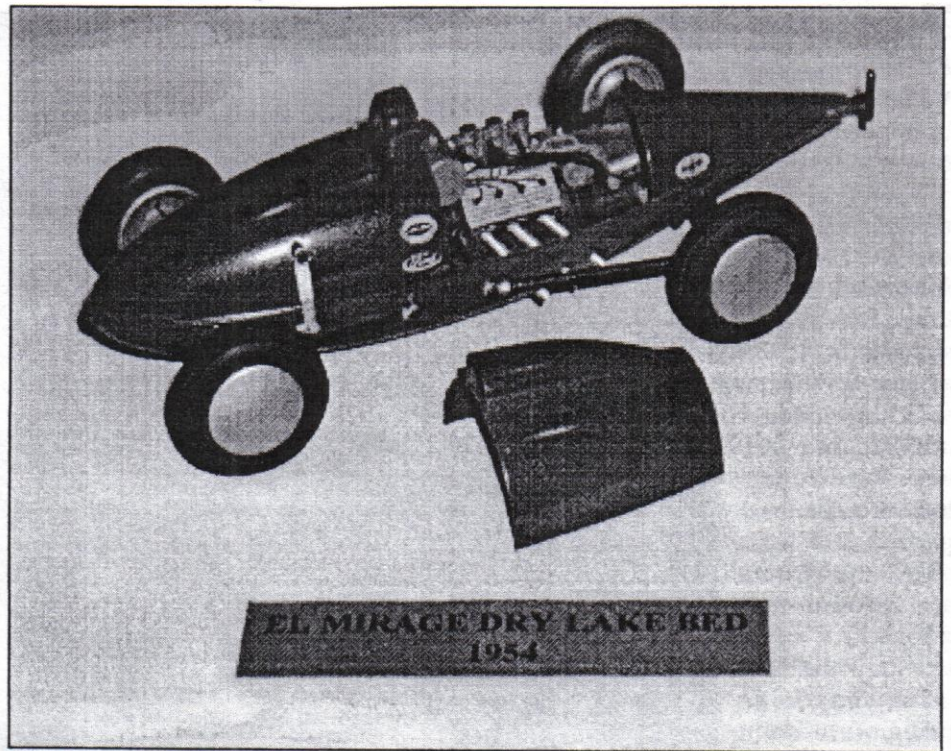
SA9 Best Muscle Car
Ford Mustang, Andy Kellock

SA8 Best Pioneer of Flight
Early Birds, Jim Lund

SA7 Best Arab-Israeli Wars Subject
F-4E *Phantom II*, Peter Long

SA6 Best 1970s Subject
TIE Fighter, Jim Lewis

SA5 Mike Williams Memorial Award—
Best Space, Science Fiction or Fantasy
Subject
AT-AT, Roy Sutherland



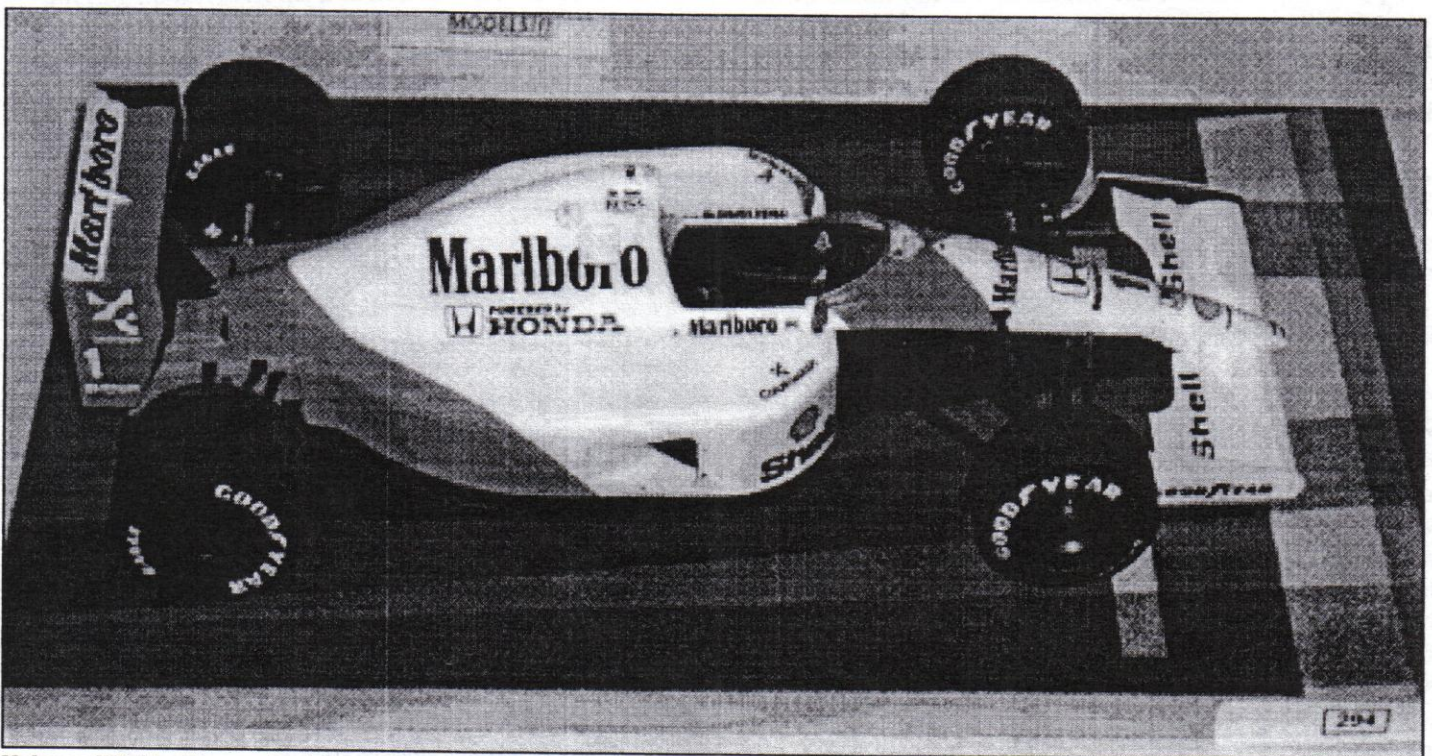
Belly Tank racer by Steve Travis.

SA4 Ayrton Senna Memorial Award—
Best Competition Car
1959 Austin Healy Sprite Mk. I, Bryan
Finch

SA3 Arlie Charter Memorial Award—
Best USAAF Pacific Subject
P-51D Mustang, Joe Fleming

SA2 Bill Magnie Memorial Award—Best
of Show, Junior
TBF *Avenger*, Andrew Haas

SA1 Ted Kauffman Memorial Award—
Best of Show, Senior
Russian Armored Cruiser, Vladimir
Yakubov



McLaren MP-4 by Thomas Leutzinger. THIRD PLACE: AUTOMOBILES, COMPETITION, OPEN WHEEL, FORMULA 1

Turning Glencoe's FB.4 into a Venezuelan Venom

Continued from page 1

Venezuelan, Swiss and British service. Ordinarily the author builds very few 1:48 models, preferring 1:72 where aircraft are concerned, however this was too good to pass up.

Upon opening the box at home and starting to build the model, something became desperately obvious at step one: no cockpit! The kit included a floor, ejector seat, canopy but no instrument panels of any kind (nothing molded, nor decals). Could it be a factory omission? Inspection of the instructions showed that it wasn't. Speaking of the instruction sheet, it is a one-page sheet with what looks like an exploded diagram with part numbers and a column stating in what chronological order these parts should be assembled in up front and an erroneous decal/paint scheme in the back.

The wing root intakes were solid and obviously had to be cut out in order for the model to resemble a DH *Venom*. The kicker was seen upon examination of the fuselage. There was a curious "band" of plastic located between the rear of the

canopy and the front of the dorsal intake not noted in the fuselage of the real thing, as if the manufacturer had settled on the scale diameter of the fuselage but then changed its mind and wanted greater diameter (without changing the smaller diameter in front). The edges of the fuselage halves also showed something that looked like chisel marks or a very rough mold set. The plastic also appeared somewhat thick and coarse. As it has been said, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade (although in this case lemon margaritas would have been more appropriate).

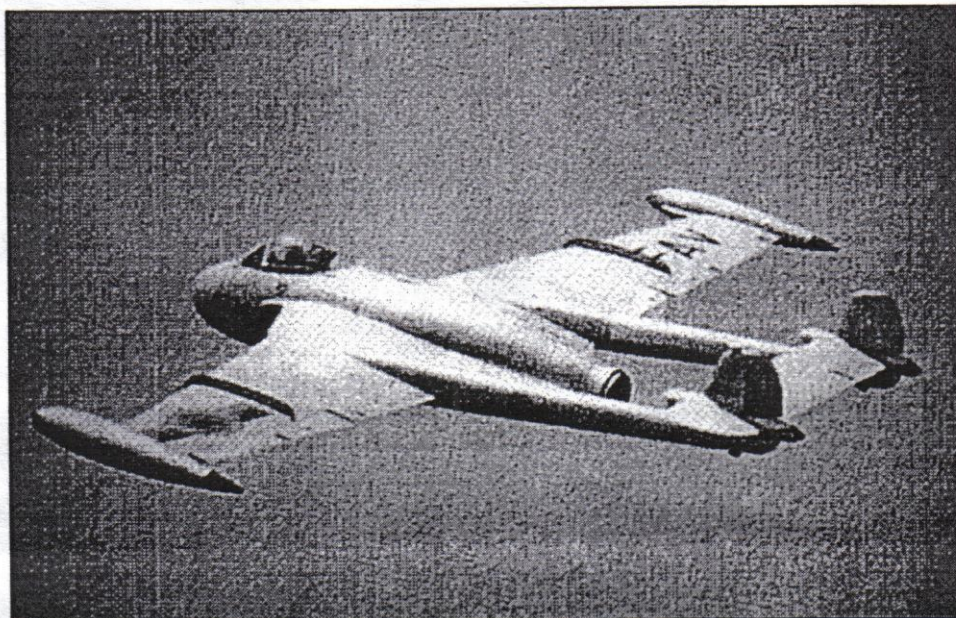
After a search on the internet failed to show a good enough drawing of the *Venom*'s cockpit for use in scratch-building, kit-bashing looked like an option. As it is, models of the *Venom* seem to be few and far between. Obviously any other Glencoe model of the *Venom* would be suspect. The stores at the time did not have any examples in 1:48 of the *Sea Venom*, so that was not an option. Eventually, as it is often the case with the author's FAV subjects, it isn't so much a decision as more of a lack of options. Reaching into the aircraft's history, the author used the *Venom*'s immediate predecessor (and in the FAV's case, stablemate), the DH *Vampire*, for use of its cockpit. Granted, purists would say the cockpit is not accurate (and they would be right), but desperation is what desperation does. A *Hobbycraft Vampire* was sacrificed for its cockpit, and other assorted parts.

Once the cockpit was fitted to the bare plastic floor and the sides fastened (after cutting out the intakes and adding weight to the nose, of course), the fuselage halves were cemented together. This then revealed several gaps in the fuselage. These would be filled later.

Dry fitting of the assembled wings revealed more gaps and fuselage wing slots just slightly too far forward (where the leading edge would be ahead of the intakes). The more curious aspect was a large slot in the aft end of the fuselage. The author postulates that sometime in its design phase,

Glencoe models wanted the *Venom* on a stand. As the stand seems to have been included with the cockpit (remember none included, even in the instructions), the slot was filled and sanded.

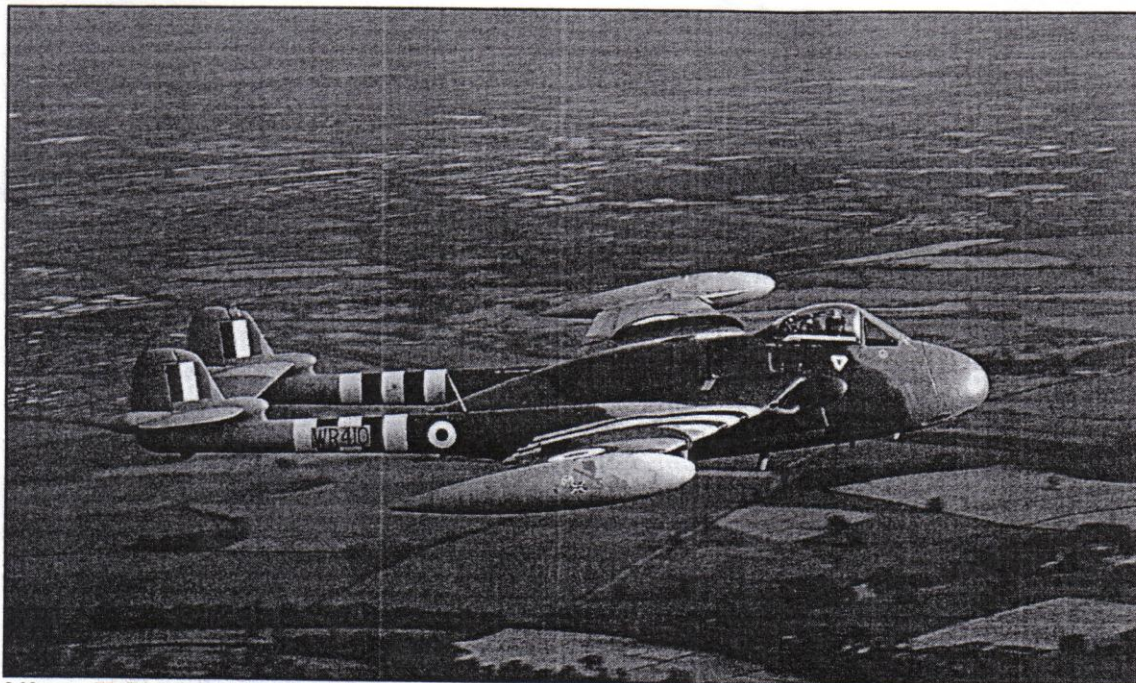
At this step, the model was painted in *Testors* Buffable Aluminum. After the paint was dry, the landing gear was cemented in place and the model was kept off its gear for five hours or so. At this



Overhead view of an FAV *Venom* shows the placement of the national insignia and FAV legend.

point the model revealed itself as a tail sitter! Note: the entire nose of the *Venom* had been filled with clay, which usually does the trick, so that the model would sit properly on its three wheels. Addition of lead pellets did not help the situation any. The cause was revealed to be that the model's landing gear was angled slightly forward, very near the leading edge of the wing. Since this pivot point is so far ahead of the aircraft's center, a drastic solution is needed. For future builds (given the author shows tendencies toward being a glutton for punishment) the author would fill the nose cavity instead with a large enough lead sinker. Since that is impossible this far into the build, the author settled on gluing the landing gear to the stand. Desperate is as desperate does! The aircraft was then sealed with *Testors* glosscote.

The decal placement portion of the instruction sheet was erroneous for the FAV *Venom*. According to the instructions, roundels and bars are on the same wing with the lettering as seen from the top and the bottom. Images and experience in the subject show that this is not the case! The FAV roundel and bar goes on the port wing (with the yellow portion facing forward) and the lettering (FAV) on the starboard wing. Once the instruction sheet was ignored in part for this step (in favor of reality) it was found that the decals seemed on the thick side. Judicious application of Dio-sol thinned them out enough to snuggle down on the surface details.



A Venom FB.5 in its indigenous colors. Venoms like this one participated in the Suez action of 1956 wearing these markings.

The decals for the outward portion of the twin rudders (having the Venezuelan flag on them) seemed somewhat crude in contour and did not quite match every curve of said structure. When all decals were placed and allowed to dry, the aircraft was again sprayed with *Testors* glosscote and allowed to dry. The aircraft was then given a dark wash and allowed to dry. When the ink wash dried, it was removed in the direction of airflow, giving the model a weathered appearance. When the excess ink was removed from the surface, the model was sprayed with *Testors* semi-glosscote.

The model was glued to an appropriate base in a desperate (but successful) attempt at setting all three wheels on the ground.

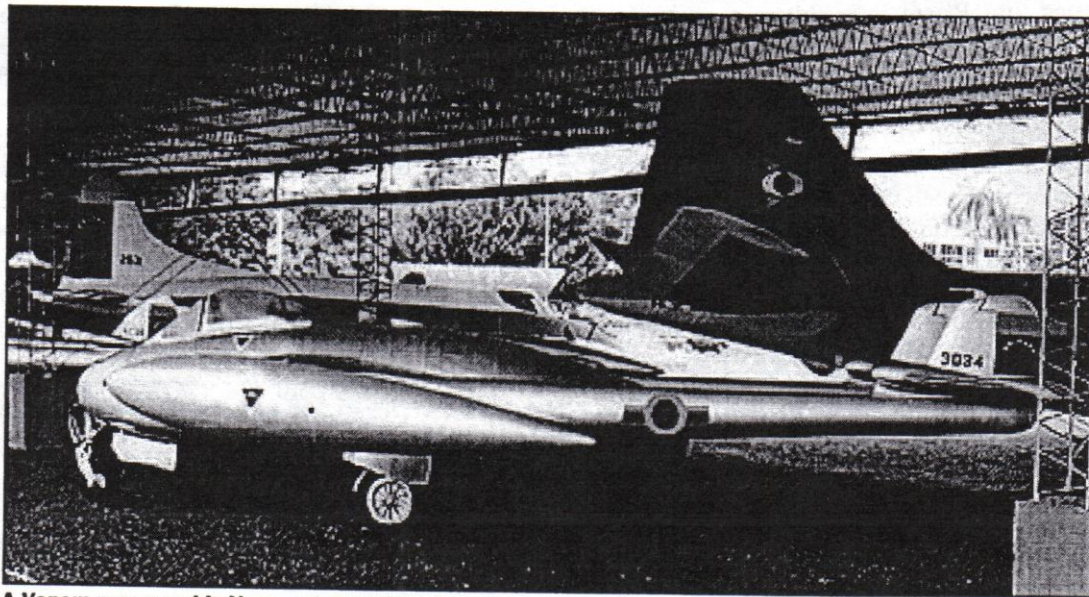
What can be said about the *Glencoe Models Venom*? This kit is a "zen model" (defined as something that can only be apparent to the builder, as in "is the glass half-empty or half-full?"). To the pessimist it is a model full of flaws that require sanding, cutting and scratchbuilding, not to mention all the investigation necessary to build it correctly. To the optimist it is a model full of opportunities that require sanding, cutting and scratchbuilding, not to mention all the wonderful investigation time necessary to build it correctly. It is also one of the few kits that the author knows of that actually comes with the Venezuelan Air Force

option already in the box (no aftermarket decals need to be purchased!).

If one examines in detail the current emblem for Venezuelan Combat Aviation (best seen on the F-16 or the C-130H), one sees a red isosceles triangle with a pair of lightning bolts (signifying bravery and the obligation to win even if it means the ultimate sacrifice), a stylized circle with the roman numerals XI (the numerals in homage to Bolivar's eleven field marshals during the Venezuelan fight for

independence from Spain). The stylized circle itself has at the forward end several striations, representing the compressor blades of a jet engine—that which pushes the combat jet forward. Truly the jet engine's roar is the sound of freedom!

Author's note: During the currently unstable political situation in Venezuela, the FAV has fallen out of favor with the regime of President Hugo Chavez. The FAV receives little of the avgas it needs to fly or money to purchase spare parts (save for the C-130Hs which, the opposition asserts, have been flying to Cuba constantly in order to train pro-Chavez paramilitary forces). The opposition asserts that Chavez is still sore over the FAV's role in putting down his 1992 coup attempts. What is known as fact is that President Chavez did not attend the FAV's Air Force Day's Festivities on Dec. 10, 2002.



A Venom preserved in Venezuela's national museum. The large tail at right belongs to a BAC Canberra.

JANUARY MINUTES

At the January meeting, Greg Plummer reported that the Low Vintage Car Club's First of the West contest was very well attended, with 60 entrants and 600 models on display! Greg also said that the winter of 2004 will see a full-scale NNL event in the South Bay. Stay tuned for more details!

In model talk... Pete Wong's *Italeri* 1:72 B-25B for the Doolittle Raiders project is complete except for the decals. Pete says the model gave him little trouble beyond painting the frames on the canopy. Ron Wergin put his latest two 1:72 subjects on a very nice base: an *Airfix Hurricane* IIb finished in desert colors and a *Tamiya* Fw 190D-9 painted with *Tamiya's* own paints. Rob also turned out two 1:35 armor pieces from *Tamiya*, an M4 Sherman and the old Marder II, which he says is not a bad kit for its age. Steve Travis stretched the frame of his *AMT* Rat Rod by a quarter-inch, then added wheels and tires from the *Revell* Rat Rod to give it the appropriate sit. To finish things off, Steve sprayed a coat of Orchard Supply Hardware spray primer to give it a perfect red primer finish. Gabriel Lee built the *Glencoe* 1:48 *Venom* FB.4 and used the kit decals to finish it in Venezuelan markings. He also fixed his Venezuelan F-16 by adding the correct missile rails for an FAB jet. Jim Lund used the *Aerovac* kit to create his 1:72 Latecouere 302, and he also employed Orchard Supply Hardware's paint for the silver, black and white areas of the model. Jim used *Testors* metallizers to enhance certain panels on the engines of his big flying boat. Covering in the shadow of the Latecouere 302 was Braulio Escoto's *Heller* F-86F, which he built a number of years ago in the colors of a *Sabre* stationed at Hamilton Air Force Base. Chris Bucholtz's *Hobbycraft* CF-100 *Canuck* is outfitted with an *Obscureco* interior and intakes and is almost ready for the addition of the wings; he's busy doing surface preparation before applying a natural metal finish. Chris has also been busy on his *Italeri* OH-6A, scratchbuilding a mini-gun to go with the entirely scratchbuilt interior. Robin Powell employed parts mastered by Roy Sutherland for *Compass Rose* to turn a splendid *Dynavector* kit of the Westland *Wyvern* into a truly spectacular model. Robin is also working on his second *AeroClub* 1:48 *Canberra*, this one a B.2 that will wear Suez stripes. Jim Priete is building a curbside model of the Cunningham C4R, using a conversion kit by *Fisher* as the basis. Mike Burton's array of models included a *Monogram* TBD *Devastator* finished in the markings worn at the Battle of the Coral Sea, a *Minicraft* 1:144 DC-3 finished in Pan American livery, a 1:48 *Monogram* *Airacobra* that served to show the difference between the P-39 and the P-63 Mike built from the *MPM* kit. Mike outfitted the P-63 with a centerline tank taken from the *Hi-Tech* kit. In 1:72 scale, Mike has been working on the *Eagle's Talon* L-39, the swept-wing Bell test aircraft, a *Rareplanes* AJ-2 *Savage* vacuform, an *Airfix* F-86D and a *Hobbycraft* F-86F *Sabre*, which he finished in Argentinian markings.

Frank Babbitt used the photoetched set from *Eduard* to dress up the interior of his *Tamiya Meteor* Mk. I, which already wears its warpaint. Mark Schynert brought in the new *Revell* Bv 222 parts for all to gawk at, see his review of this big new kit elsewhere in this issue. Ben Pada had a host of P-47s on the table, including a new *Tamiya* razorback, *Hasegawa's* razorback and bubbletop, and a P-47N by *Academy*. Also built up was a new *Tamiya* Me 262; Ben says it's a nice kit, but it requires a lot of fiddling to get it to build right. Hubert Chan has multiple disciplines going, starting with a *Tamiya* 1:35 Panther G that he's outfitted with brass engine screens, a new gun barrel, scratch-made weld beads and lifting lugs. In the automotive world, Hubert has a Porsche 956 under way; he's building this *Tamiya* kit out of the box. Finally, in the aviation section, Hubert has a *Fujimi* Bf 109K-4 assembled and painted; the interior of the plane was supplied by *Cooper Details*. Bill Bauer took the *Quickskins* transkit and a *Dragon* chassis and, once they were put together, found himself with a fine replica of the 1997 BMW R racer. The interior was done using carbon fiber decals. Greg Plummer's Strv 103 "S-Tank," built using the *Trumpeter* kit, looked as good in person as it did in last month's Styrene Sheet. Greg also built *Revell's* 1:144 Rafale M, an exercise that he says gave him new respect for small-scale modelers. Eric McClure has his *Tamiya* Willys Jeep painted and decaled, and he's ready to weather it. Eric applied techniques used for clothing on figures to give a worn look to the Jeep's worn seat cushions. Chris Hughes has the hull of his *Trumpeter* S-Tank cleaned up and ready for assembly after just 20 minutes of work. Laramie Wright's two Shermans are from opposite ends of the earth: an *Italeri* Marine Corps M4A2, freshly outfitted with T-54 duck-bill tracks by *Cromwell*, and an Israeli M50 that has been outfitted with a brass barrel and detail parts from *Aber*. Tom Harrison had the parts from *Trumpeter's* new 1:24 P-51D on the table for all to examine. Cliff Kranz built his *Academy* jeep straight from the box to represent a vehicle he drove in the service. Kent McClure had eight 1:43 cars on the table, including a *Salido* kit of the Porsche 917-30 and a converted 917-PA European CanAm racer. Also in the mix were two French Rambeaus, a 348 and a 482. Kent is also building an *Italeri* B-25B, and he's working on a 1:72 *Italeri* T-72M; he textured the turret of the little tank to give it greater realism. Aiden Mackin had to rebuild much of his 1:72 *Airfix* 88mm flak gun after he found a leftover part! Aiden said the moving parts on this little gun were tricky. And the model of the month goes to... John Cobb's 1:350 model of the U.S.S. *Hornet*, built using the *Tom's Modelworks* *Essex*-class kit. John spent 900 hours on the model, building 69 aircraft and adding 600 figures. He built a full hangar deck for the model, which will be donated to the U.S.S. *Hornet* museum.

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

The Hamilton Concise Guides:

British Aircraft of WWII

American Aircraft of WWII

Axis Aircraft of WWII

compiled by David Mondey

These three guides have been around since the mid-1980s, but have been reprinted regularly. I picked up the 2002 printings recently and was very impressed.

If your interest is in WWII aircraft, it's always helpful to have books at hand that act as surveys of the most important aircraft. It's a great way to start your research, and will give some insight into types for which you probably aren't inclined to buy specific monographs. These books more than fill the bill for the listed subject areas, covering aircraft from the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Most of the types are illustrated by either a photo or a small 3-view drawing; the more important types may also rate a color 3-view or one or more color profiles. The text tends to be bland, and not always absolutely accurate, but it's certainly good enough in most cases, given that these are surveys.

What's truly amazing about these books, especially the American and British guides, is the very expansive definition applied to "major" aircraft. You certainly get *Spitfires* and *Blenheims* and *Lancasters* and *Sunderlands*, but also among the 113 types covered in the British volume are the *Airspeed Queen Wasp* (target drone, five built), *Vickers Windsor* (experi-

mental heavy bomber, three flown), *Gloster F.9/37* (experimental twin-engined fighter, two built), and *Miles Monitor* (twin-engined target tug, 20 built). Also included are a collection of interwar biplanes you won't find in most such works: *Vincent*, *Vildebeest*, *Gordon*, *Fox*, *Wapiti*, *Wallace*, *Nimrod*, *Osprey*, *Bulldog* and *Gauntlet*; a variety of light planes; and a number of types that did not see service at all beyond testing, such as the *Spiteful* and *Welkin*. In every such case, the detail is at least good, and sometimes superlative, given how difficult it can be to track down references on some of these types.

The American volume is equally impressive, including among its 133 entries such esoterica as the *Fleetwings BT-12*, *Douglas B-23*, *St. Louis PT-15*, *Allied LRA-1* amphibious assault glider and *Fairchild Model 45*. The American volume also has the only glaring error I've found so far: the entry for the obscure *Laister-Kaufmann TG-4* includes a three-view labeled as such, but it's actually a drawing of the very different, much larger and even more obscure *Laister-Kaufmann CG-10 Trojan Horse*, which otherwise isn't in the book.

The Axis volume is good as well, but does not dwell nearly as much on the exotic, since it has to cover at least twice the territory with 137 entries; certainly, one book could have been devoted just to German aircraft. Still, the *Ar 197* and *Kayaba Ka-1* make the cut. The one omission that bothered me was the *IAR 80* series from Romania, which really belonged in this volume instead of either or both of the above choices, but that's a relatively small bone to pick.

The books cost me \$10 each; they're well worth it.

—Mark Schynert

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THAT EVENING---

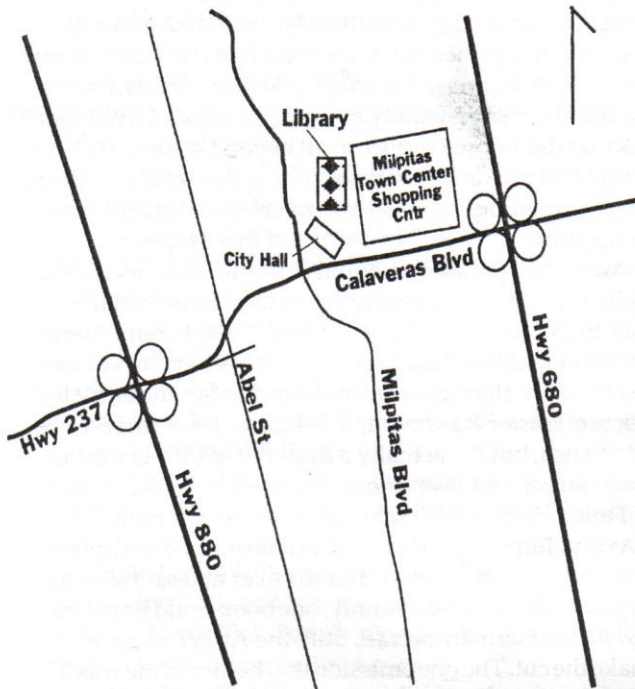
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Back to Milpitas to start the new year...



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January 17**

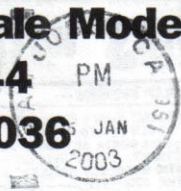
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It's January, thus it's time to pay your dues!