THE STYRENE SHEET

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A modern take on Willy Ley's 1950's Space(d) Taxi

By Kent McClure

Reubens Stafford looked out of the cockpit window into the darkness of space as he drummed his fingers against the bulkhead. He was bored. Five years out of the US Space Force and the only job he could find was as a space cabbie. He'd left Spiffy a year before they turned its inter-station supply service over to the commercial sector. The big Earthbound airlines had pooled their resources and bought all of the surplus equipment and divided up the space lanes between themselves. So here he was piloting the same old tube that he had back in his service days. But now it was for American Airlines servicing the run between Space Station Alpha Six and Space Hub Beta.

He glanced out at the two astronauts that were manhandling the cargo and wondered who had the most boring job. He finally decided that he did. At least the astronauts got to move around and they could go inside when their job was done. He had to loiter around during the loading and unloading, then "pilot" something that was no better than a glorified piece of pipe back and forth between destinations. Well, in a couple of years it will be year 2000 and the dawn of a new century. Perhaps things will get better.

Monogram's Willy Ley Space Taxi was originally released in the 1950's—a simpler time when the outlook for space travel was very optimistic. Kent project used the 1996 release.

Or so the story would have gone had it been written back in the late '50s when Monogram released its Willy Ley Space Taxi. The 1950s version of space travel was very optimistic. How many of you remember the "Rocketship to the Moon" ride at Disneyland? Or those wonderful animated Disney shorts that they showed in elementary school science classes? The stories that filled the dime store sci-fi novels were full of examples of thriving Moon- or Mars-based colonies or huge wheels spinning in space.

Monogram Models, Inc., of Chicago, picked up on that enthusiasm and produced a series of four models based on the design of Willy Ley. (Ley was touted on the kits as "a famous space travel authority." He, in fact, was a rocket scientist. Born in Germany in 1906, he studied science at German universities, his first love being paleontology. He was actually planning to have a career in geology, but abandoned that plan in 1926 after reading some material written by the rocket scientist Hermann Oberth. The direction that Ley now found his life turning to resulted in him taking a leading role in the founding of the German Society for Space Travel in 1927. He helped make this organization the center of international activity in rocket research, brought Werner von Braun and others into the group, conducted important experiments, and in particular, helped develop the liquid-fuel rocket. He fled to the U.S. in 1935, when the Nazi authorities were forcing rocket research to go down the military path. Ironically, he was unable to raise any financial support in the U.S. for rocket research and space travel and turned to writing as a means of paying the bills.

In 1949, he won an award for his book Conquest of Space. He died in 1969. Yes, indeed - Willy Ley was a space travel authority.

The models Willy Ley designed were the TV Orbiter (which consisted of a rocket, launch pad and the payload), the Orbital Rocket, the Passenger Rocket, and, of course, the Space Taxi. I actually remember seeing this kit on the shelves as a youngster and occasionally thought that it would be something fun to have. But as I grew up, my modeling tastes tended towards the orthodox and reality. As a result, the desire for the kit disappeared as did its availability. By the mid 1960s the real space race was heating up and the modeling powers that be focused their space efforts on those vehicles.

But as the 1960s drew to a close a new phenomena had appeared and it was called Star Trek. And, if there was one

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

EDITOR'S BRIEF

Congratulations to the whole club and particularly the president and vice presidents on pulling off another outstanding *Kickoff Classic*. The SVSM *Kickoff Classic* has grown in popularity so much that the number of entries this year eclipsed last year's record by 23 percent! The unofficial tally is 495 entries and that does not include counting the individual models in the collections category. That is 92 more entries than last year. To give you a little perspective, the *IMPS Nationals* held last year in Phoenix was a very well attended show and had in the neighborhood of 2000 entries making our show nearly a quarter the size of the national contest.

Now I don't think our little show will be rivaling the *Nationals* in size anytime soon, but I have to say the quality of the models are very much equal to that of what you would see at the national show. In fact, I recognized several of the models this Sunday as having been at *Nationals*.

As the *Kickoff Classic* was so close to print time, I will have more coverage on the contest in next month's issue.

I want to truly thank everyone who has submitted articles to the *Styrene Sheet* over the last few weeks. The response has been very encouraging—it's amazing what a meat–clever can do. While I am happy to say that I have this and next month's issue covered, I do what to encourage you all to submit articles early and often. This month's issue devoured articles from four different authors, a three-page *Minutes* section (it is usually two pages) as well as a full-page ad for the regional show, a large contest calendar and a self-indulgent ad for the SVSM Web site. A lot of content can disappear very quickly and then I am back to making movie posters, so please keep these submission coming.

Speaking of the Web site—wanna try something neat? Go to Google.com—not now, you're probably in the bathroom reading this, but when you are at your computer, go to Google.com and type in "IPMS Nationals 2004" and see what you get. Isn't that neat? Our Web site is ranked higher than the 2004 Nationals site. Now try this—type in "Tamiya F-117." How about that? Again, our site is ranked higher than even Tamiya's own site. Why am I pointing this out? I don't know, I just thought it was cool, but I do know that if you want to get your model or walk around seen, talk to someone on the Web–team and SVSM.org will make that happen.

- The Editor

Greg Plummer had the honor of handing out trophies to the winners at the 2005 Kickoff Classic. Steve Travis adds another award to his stack.

CONTEST CALENDAR

Friday & Saturday, March 11 & 12: **Southern California Area Historical Miniature Society (SCAHMS)** present their **2005 SCAHMS California Show** at the Doubletree Hotel, 100 The City Drive, Orange, CA 92868. For more information visit the SCAHMS web site at http://home1.gte.net/sulla1/index.htm.

April 16-17, 2005: **Tamiya** presents their The 10th Annual **TamiyaCon** at Tamiya America, Inc., 2 Orion, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656. For more information, visit their web site at http://www.tamiyausa.com.

April 28 - May 1st, 2005: The 20th annual **GSL International Scale Vehicle Championship and Convention** at the Wyndham Hotel, 215 W. South Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84094. For more information contact Mark S. Gustavson at msg@GSLChampionship.org or visit their web site at www.gslchampionship.org.

Saturday, May 21: **IPMS/Fremont Hornets** present the **Region 9 Regional Contest** at the Newark Community Center, 35501 Cedar Blvd., Newark, CA 94560. For more information, contact Mark Schynert at mass22@earthlink.net with the words, "Tri-City Contest" in the subject line, or call him at (510) 769-8316.

September 10, 2005: **The Reno High Rollers** host their annual contest. Details as they become available.

October 8, 2005: **IPMS Santa Rosa** hosts its annual contest. Details as they become available.

IPMS/Fremont Hornets &
the Newark Community Center Proudly Cosponsor –

TRI-CITY
REGION 9 CONTEST

Scale Model Contest and Exhibition

Saturday, May 21, 2005

45 Categories –

- Aircraft
- Automobiles
- Figures
- Ships
- Military Vehicles
- Space & Sci-fi

Special Awards–

- Best Aircraft or Space Vehicle
- Best Armor
- Best Civilian Land Vehicle
- Best Figure or Robot
- Tri-City Award for best three of a kind—three thematically-related models by a single contestant in the same category (i.e.: Chevy low-riders, 1/72 Fw 190s, Star Trek ships, Aloha airliners)

Plus vendors, a raffle and a free Make 'n Take for children 15 and under!

The Newark Community Center, 35501 Cedar Blvd., Newark, California

9 a.m.–Registration Opens
Noon–Registration Closes
1 p.m.–Judging Begins
3:30 p.m.–Awards Ceremony

Entry fees–

$5 for modelers 18 and older, plus $1 for each model after the first two entries.

$1 for modelers 17 and younger with no charge for additional entries.

$2 discount for seniors with a current IPMS membership

Free admission for all non-competitors.

For vender information call–
Jim Priete
Weekdays 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
(925) 323-1845.

Tables are $40 until April 1
$45 until May 20
$50 on the day of the event.

For more information, contact Mark Schynert at (510) 796-3331 or email him at mass22@earthlink.net with 'Tri-City Contest' in the subject line.

Converting Revell's 1:25 SSR into a concept wagon

By Andy Kellock

This project started as a club build of the new SSR kit. I wanted something different.

While I think the SSR is cool with the top down, I feel that the up-top is too small and looks out of place on that big body. So I knew I had to do something with the roof line. A common conversion is to take a sedan or hardtop and turn it into an El Camino/Ranchero, so I played around with reversing this idea and turn this truck into a hardtop.

I was having trouble finding an appropriate donor roof and also started to realize how much interior conversion would be required. I only had three months to build this, and already had several other projects that I was working on and didn't want to abandon. So I knew I had to keep the bed and cover it, and the most obvious choice was a panel delivery or a station wagon. That's when the Nomad idea kicked in. It would be perfect. It would keep the "newstalgia" theme that the SSR started; it would have an immediately identifiable heritage and 2005 is the 50th anniversary of the Nomad.

So I opened the dusty vault and brought out my Nomad kits. I must say I was extremely surprised when I found that the roof on the 55, 56 and 57 Nomads to be identical. Apart from the obvious transverse grooves which they all share, all of the window openings and pillars are the same. That's one of the things I love about conversion projects like this – I always learn some little trivial fact that ties in to a bigger picture.

AMT's 1955 Chevrolet Nomad lent its roof to the Revell Chevrolet SSR kit to produce Andy's Nomad SSR concept car.

The roof line of the 50's era Nomad works well with the SSRs "newstalgia" theme.

Since the AMT 55 Nomad had just been re-released and was in 1:25th scale, the choice was obvious. My intent was to separate the roof from the body at the lower window frame line so I could retain the original window openings to save time. However my measurements indicated that this would cause a major alignment problem with the SSR windshield which was very low due to its extreme backwards rake. I toyed with the idea of using the 55 Nomad windshield, but I didn't like the look, and filling in the cowl area would be difficult. I also wanted to retain as much of the SSR as I could, which included the modern dash. Another deciding factor was the fact that the length of the Nomad roofline from the windshield header to the rear was almost the same as the length of the SSR. So I decided to retain the stock SSR windshield height and match the roof to this height.

It turned out that the easiest way to do this was to cut the Nomad roof away at the base of the pillars and drill holes in the SSR body for these pillars to fit into. Then plastic strip was used to create framing at the bottom of the window openings. This created a mild chopped look which I liked. However, this also had the effect of shrinking the window openings too much, so to relieve this I cut the original trim out of the window frames. The only problem with this marriage is that the Nomad roof is rectangular in shape whereas the SSR body is more curved with its widest point at midbody and narrower at front and rear.

I was faced with having to do pie-cuts at the front and rear of the Nomad roof to match this body profile. Easier at the front, but difficult at the rear because I would have to fill in and rescribe the transverse roof grooves. I decided not to reshape the roof and tried to make it fit the body the best I could. I found that if I split the windshield header in the middle I could bend the A-pillars out to match the roof at the front. This was made easier by making relief cuts in the four corners of the windshield frame. I filled

in the gap at the center with plastic strip. The drip rails were removed to give the car a more modern look. Most of the body work was done by filling in with plastic strips and sanding to minimize the amount of putty to avoid shrinkage problems after painting.

All the body modifications were done with styrene and super glue and the blending was done with Evercoat Glazecoat two-part putty. Plastikote primer was used to reveal any imperfections in my modifications as well as in the original body, such as the near invisible seam lines around the headlights and taillights that were missed in the sanded plastic. After everything was smooth I covered the entire body with Tamiya gloss black spray can lacquer. Two mist coats and two wet coats. Then the next day I masked off the body at the character line using Tamiya tape and shot the top half of the body with Testors Anthracite Gray metallic with an airbrush. Again, a couple of mist coats and then one wet coat. I let the gray dry for a day, gave it a light wet sand and then one more wet coat, and let it dry for a week.

The red pinstripe that separates the colors is Contact paper (the same stuff you use to line your drawers) sliced to 1:64" using a metal rule and a sharp #11 blade. Because the Contact is vinyl it follows contours very well, and the adhesive is strong.

After the pinstripe was laid, the whole model was clearcoated with Testors Boyds High Gloss clear. The interior is box-stock, painted two tone gray – Humbrol #40 and #32. Detail painted with aluminum and chrome silver and a black wash.

Windows were made from 0.010" clear styrene attached with Kristal Klear. Because there was a gap between the door line and the B-pillar I added a little quarter window in this space.

Engine is also box stock, painted aluminum with a black wash. Engine cover is painted Anthracite to match the body. I thought the chrome wheels, grill-bar and other accents were too bright against the black/anthracite, so I painted all of the chrome with Anthracite or black.

The wheels were shot with Alclad Steel. The chassis and suspension is also from the box, although I did lower the wheels as much as I could. You can't lower the wheels too much because of the fender wells, but you can get away from the truck look by dropping them until the tires touch the tops of the wells. In front this was achieved by cutting the lower A-arms off the frame and gluing it to some plastic strips glued on top of the frame. The upper A-arms were left out, but you can't see them anyway with the lowering. In the rear, the springs were

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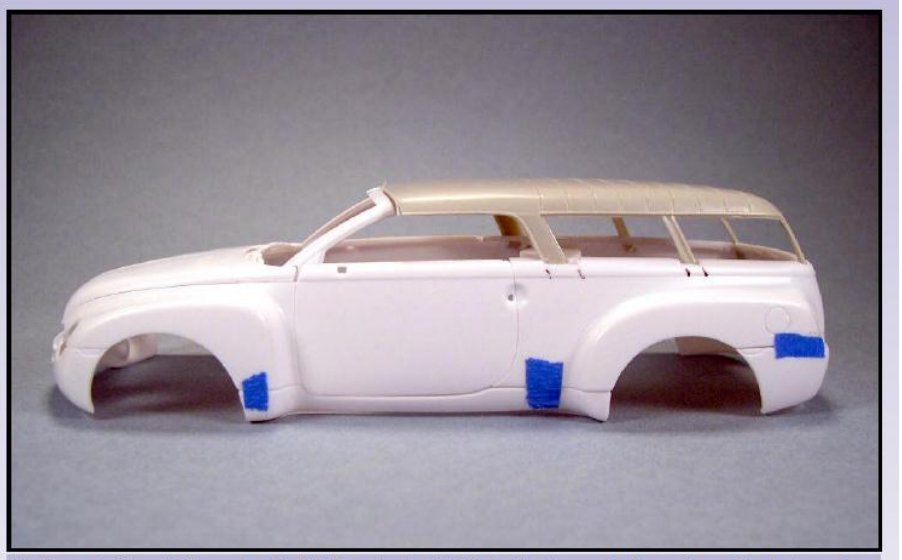
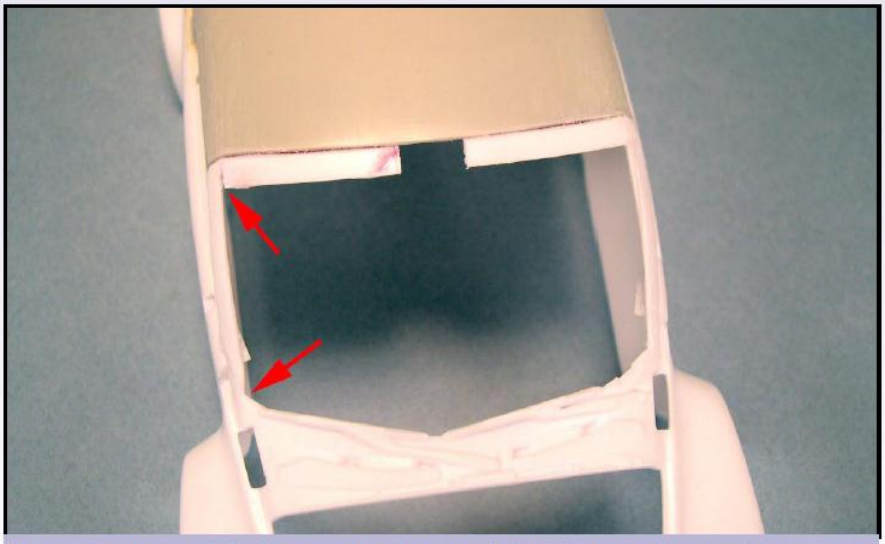


Andy retained the stock SSR windshield height and therefore had to chop down the Nomad roof height to match.



Andy split the windshield header in the middle to bend the A-pillars out to match the roof at the front and made relief cuts in the four corners of the windshield frame. He filled in the gap at the center with plastic strip.

The interior is the kit plastic painted two tone gray – Humbrol #40 and #32. Details that were painted with aluminum and chrome silver with a black wash.

Ray O'Niell–master modeler & scratch builder

By Jim Lund

Some thoughts on making a hobby of building a same scale collection of model airplanes, and if there is any redeeming value in it

I've just returned from a five-week tour of the North American continent, the apex of which was Long Island, New York. Think aviation history: Roosevelt Field, Lindbergh, Byrd, Bellanca, Sikorsky, Curtiss, Burnelli, Baichen, wrong way Corrigan etc. etc. Hell, Rudy Arnold made a living just hanging around with a camera. It is now a shopping mall. Bennett Field is gone, and the Port Washington sea plane base as well.

Ah… but there is respite! Here at 1515 Sycamore Avenue, Merrick Long Island, New York, I found my hero to be alive and well. Of course I'm referring to Ray O'Neill. I was able to spend a few hours here looking over his workshop, which comprises the entire basement. Also, there are a few glass-enclosed cabinets here and some upstairs, which display much of Ray's work.

Ray O'Neill, at his home in Long Island, New York. Ray is America's most enthusiastic, productive scratch builder and kit basher.

Ray is the creator of more than 300 original 1:72 molds and he's not through yet. Dedication—he's got it!

Over the past 35 or 40 years, Ray has created more than 300 original 1:72 wooden molds for vacuforming plastic airplane models. More than half of his originals have now been produced as injected kits by the amazing Czech Republic. Ray laments "if I had only been patient, I could have saved so much time and energy." It's true that 35 years ago, what serious modeler would believe that all these kits would be pouring across the world market. But Ray still has 150 kits that have not been done by anyone else.

I came away with a loan of molds for a Keystone B-4 Bomber, Fairchild C-82A "Packet," Fairchild "American Pilgrim" and the world's largest float plane, C.R.D.A Cant Z.511. This four-engine transport was designed by Filippo Zappata for Alitalia's South Atlantic route. It was taken over by the Regia Aeronautica and given standard camouflage. An ambitious plan for raiding New York was hatched, but never executed. All these molds were shipped to Cedar Glen, Ca., where Mike Herrill of Execuform fame will make some copies. They will eventually turn up as finished models at a future SVSM meeting.

I reckon that the bottom line on all of this is that we modelers are able to recreate, in a small way, what society has lost in her irreverent disregard for aviation history.

A hobby is defined as "A pursuit of interest, undertaken for pleasure during one's leisure; avocation." Don't you forget it! If you aren't having fun modeling, re-examine your motives.

Jim Lund retired from a career at Pacific Bell in 1982 and now presides over the Spirit of 72 Model Museum of Aviation, his 1400-plus model collection, all in 1:72 scale. When they aren't traveling around the world, Jim and his wife Chris live in San Jose.

Building Heller's 10:1 scale *oryctes nasicornis*

By Steve Travis

What's bugging you about this model?

First it was "Battle Cattle." Then it was "Porcine Pulchritude." What's next? Well, I think it just might be, "Insect Insanity." My contribution to this mayhem is the Heller kit of ORYCTES NASICORNIS or the Rhinoceros Beetle.

Heller has a number of insect models including, FORMICA RUFA (the Ant), LUCANIS CERVUS (the Stag beetle) & COCCINELLA (the Lady bug) as well as the Rhino. I thought the Rhinoceros Beetle was the most impressive mainly because of the horn. On reflection though, the Stag beetle is quite impressive also with its giant, menacing mandibles. But the Stag will have to wait until another day.

Now let's get back to the kit. There are 13 pieces to the model and the instructions are adequate, as far as painting and assembly goes, but lacks any information on detail. So, I got on the Internet and searched the Web for any information I could download on this forcible, imposing creature.

Steve painted false eyelashes Afrika Mustard Brown to simulate the little fella's bristles. He attached the eyelashes with double sided sponge tape—just like mom used to.

Most of the pictures on the Web show a dark brown, almost blackish brown color over most of the head and body with light brown or even tan hair-like bristles showing between and around the major body segments. One site I found showed a rather pleasing reddish brown color to the insect that I found more to my liking.

I determined that to achieve this color I could spray Testors Transparent Candy Apple Red directly over the black plastic of the kit. I know this because once upon a time I tried to get a "deep" candy red color on a model car by spraying the candy red over gloss black. What was I thinking? The car came out a deep reddish brown. Nowhere near what I was aiming for but the color stuck in my mind and resurfaced when I saw the color of the bug on the monitor.

To simulate *oryctes nasicornis'* redish-brown color, Steve sprayed candy–apple red over an under coat of gloss black, leaving a finish worthy of a tiny Duesenberg.

I sprayed rattle can Candy Apple Red over all 13 unassembled pieces and allowed the parts to dry for a couple of days. I then prepared a wash of flat black acrylic paint and let the wash settle in the joints of the legs and segmented underbelly. I also used a black Gundam marker to darken and highlight the horn, parts of the head and some areas of the wing covers. I used Model Master Afrika Mustard to color the fine bristles found between and around the various body segments.

The painting of the model is complete at this point but lacks realism. I pondered this problem for quite some time trying to think of a way to make, or should I say more correctly, to simulate the bristles that protrude out between the upper and lower body segments. I considered flocking like that used in model car interiors, but passed on that idea because I can't make any flocking job look good. I thought about cutting bristles from a stiff paintbrush but that would mean literally gluing each and every hair individually. I don't think so! What I came up with is the use of false eyelashes. The lashes are very fine and are held in a row with the smallest of "beading." I prepainted three sets of lashes with Afrika Mustard brown. Once dry, I used double-sided sponge tape to adhere the lashes to the inside of the lower body section. Then I assembled the model. The fit of the upper to the lower body pieces as well as the upper and lower head pieces is typical Heller, very crappy. Even without the lashes hanging out the fit would still be crappy, but by using super glue and accelerator I was able to close up all of the gaps. Once all major body parts were securely affixed and dried, I trimmed the lashes to a jagged random length. Now, my Oryctes Nasicornis looks as real as I can make it or at least as real as Tammy Faye Baker looks with her fake eyelashes.

Steve Travis started building models in 1958 and he joined SVSM around 1996. Steve's favorite subjects are cars of all kinds but mainly Hot Rods and Old Dragsters/ Lakesters.

Building Monogram's 1950's Space Taxi

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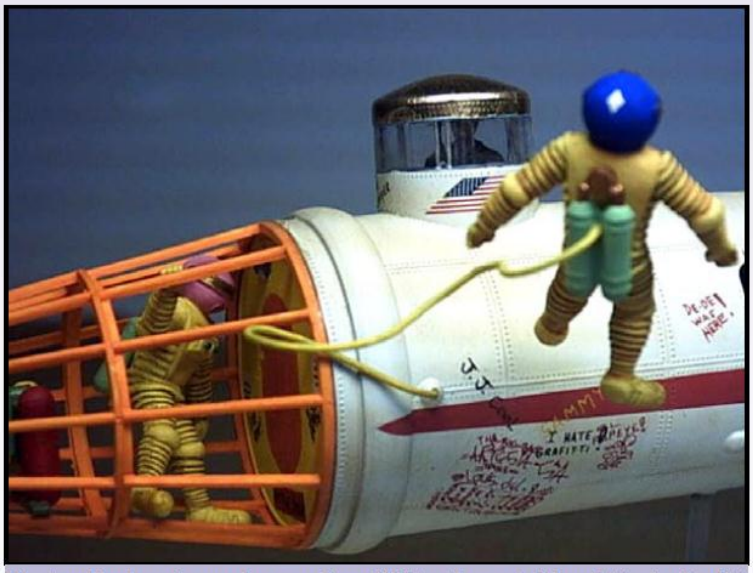
thing that Gene Roddenberry and the producers of Star Trek knew how to do, it was how to market a product. They entered into an agreement with AMT to produce model kits based on the series. And thus opened the door for a new age of TV inspired sci-fi models. Can you remember seeing kits based on Space 1999, Battlestar Galactica or Buck Rogers? And how about their big screen brethren from the great (and not so great) flicks - Star Wars, Planet of the Apes and The Black Hole? (That one goes under the Not so Great category!)

So where is all this nostalgic waxing leading? (Or in other words, just shut up and get to the point!) Well, it was during this period that I had matured and began to develop my somewhat warped outlook on modeling. So by the time Monogram introduced its SSP series and reissued the Space Taxi in 1996, I was ready for it. Here was a great, no brainer kit that I could build just for fun! So, it went on my Birthday/Christmas list and finally ended up in my hands, or my shelves, actually. And there it sat. And sat. And sat. It wasn't until 2001 (somewhat ironically appropriate) that I decided to sit down and build the thing. So I cracked open the box.



Kent added various pieces of graffiti to the outside of the hull with an extra fine tipped black permanent marker.

What you got upon opening the box was 26 white and six clear pieces of plastic, two pieces of wire, and a real instruction sheet. (For you youngsters, once upon a time the instructions were more than just a piece of paper with drawings and numbered callouts. It actually told you in words (yes, WORDS!) and photographs what went where and when. It also had the decency of telling you exactly what that little widget you were looking at was.)

My original thought was to build the kit exactly as if I was building it when I was a kid - following the instructions line by line. That idea, however, got tossed out as soon as I started to actually read the instructions. Within the first three steps you were supposed to attach the stiff wires that were to act as the astronauts' safety lines, install the porthole windows, and glue the pilot to his pedestal. I didn't do any of that.

I started off by handpainting the entire interior (including the deck) Polly Scale USSR Underside Blue. Unfortunately, it took four or five coats to cover it completely. The two cargo nets were painted Polly Scale British Brown Drab PC 10. When everything was completely dried, I gave the cargo netting a wash of black ink and the ribbing on the cargo door and deck a wash of brown ink. I glued the deck and the front bulkhead to the left hull half, but I did not "trap" the cargo door pins in place. I noticed during dryfitting that I could slip the cargo door in place after the deck was in. So I left it off at this time for ease of construction.

It was at this point that the dread AMS (advanced modeler's syndrome) took hold of what little sanity I had left. The pilot area looked too clean to me. Barren, in fact. There were no controls for the pilot to use whatsoever. Was he supposed to fly the vehicle via telekinesis? I quickly cobbled up an instrument panel and left and right hand consoles out of scrap plastic. (The right hand console is the flight control station - basically a glorified joystick from some kid's computer game system. The left-hand console is the throttle control and the computer tie in station.) Conduits running from the consoles and the IP down to the floor were replicated using some insulated solid wire that was bent to the proper shape and attached via superglue.

By the time I had finished fiddling around with the "cockpit" area, the ink washes in the cargo area was well dried and I could continue in there. The cargo netting was highlighted with a series of increasingly lighter drybrushings, beginning with a yellowish tan color. Then the back wall was graffitied with an extra fine tipped black permanent marker. After everything had thoroughly dried, the entire cargo bay was weathered with brown pastel chalk. Once again, AMS kicked up. I realized that there were no controls inside of the bay for opening or closing the cargo door. Again, scrap wire and insulated wire came to the rescue.

At this time, I still had not considered what color scheme I was going to paint the space taxi in. But I was convinced that if I was working outside in space, I would want to know exactly where the entry doors to the taxi were at all times. So, I decided to paint the entry hatches and the bulkheads different colors - plain old Polly S Yellow for the bulkhead and CP Red (from Polly S' railroad range - and it looks more orangey than red) for the hatches. Just for the fun of it, I picked out the hinges in white. But the bulkheads still looked too plain to me. Something was missing. For starters, I got to wondering how an astronaut on the outside knew it was safe to come inside. So I decided to add some warning lights above the hatch. I painted a small white rectangle to use as a base, and then went parts hunting. From my assortment of 1:43rd scale parts, I produced a small red marker light. From my model railroad parts, I found a clear cylindrical headlight. I used a green permanent marker to color the backside of it. However, it didn't stay green. The ink somehow reacted with the superglue that I used to attach the piece to the model and it ended up a sort of dark blue. Seeing as it was too late to do anything about it, I just left it. I then painted on some warning placards in white and red, and "lettered" them with an extra-

fine tip black permanent marker.

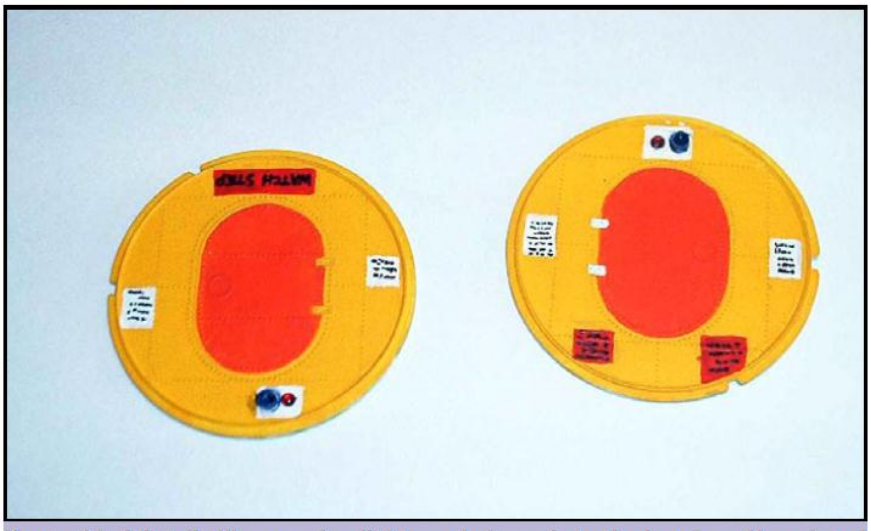
It was at this point in time, I started to look at the kit from an engineer's standpoint and began to question Willy Ley's qualifications as a space expert. The first thing that struck me was the fact that you had two hatches that lead to the "cages" fore and aft that hold the small RCS (reaction control system) motors that would be used to maneuver the vehicle. And that's as far as you can get. Looking at the bulky suits that the astronauts are wearing, there is no way that they can get by the RCS motors let alone through the small opening at the end of the cage.

The next minor problem would be where are the actual working astronauts supposed to go during the transit stage of the journey. There is no interior hatch between the pilot's compartment and the cargo bay. So that means they would travel just like another piece of cargo. And speaking of the pilot's compartment, there is no airlock separating it from the hatch. So the pilot would have to suit up before the hatch is cracked to let anyone out to look at the RCS motor. But then again, how is the pilot even supposed to get into the pilot's compartment with only one hatch that leads into a cage that you can't get in or out of?

What kind of expert is this guy? To do this correctly, you need to add a hatch of sorts between the pilot's compartment and the cargo hold and possibly an airlock. Are we approaching AMS yet?

Okay, back to the build. The fit of the fuselage (the "tube") wasn't too bad, but there was some misalignment which necessitated some filing/sanding. Even using a flexi-file, sanding round objects and keeping the appearance of roundness is a royal pain. In this case, it was even worse because in doing the work some of the rivet detail was obliterated. This was repaired using drops of white glue. There are other ways to duplicate rivets, including drilling, inserting thin plastic rod and flattening the heads (AMS Alert! AMS Alert!). With this done, the painting process was ready to begin. The cargo hatch was slipped into place and held in place with masking tape applied from the inside of the taxi. The windows were also masked off from the inside, then the openings at both ends and the cockpit area was blanked off from the outside with tape. The body was primed with a light grey flat enamel paint. This helped to identify a couple of areas where touch up was needed as well as provide a uniform color to spray over. When everything looked okay, Testors Classic White enamel paint was sprayed in multiple light layers and the kit was stashed in a dust free box to dry for a couple of days. Any paint imperfections were lightly sanded out and the area was resprayed. This went through two or three cycles before I was satisfied with it and left it in the box for long term drying. In the meantime, I handpainted the cage area and the crew with acrylics. The crew figures were

Cramped quarters. How's this supposed to work? The astronauts would not be able to get past RCS motors and could only return to the cargo bay.



Kent added details like warning lights and placards to the hatches. He painted the entry hatches CP Red and the bulkheads Polly S Yellow so that the hatches would be plainly visible to the crew.

Graffiti was accomplished using an extra fine tipped permanent marker. The two cargo nets were painted Polly Scale British Brown Drab PC 10 and given a wash of black ink.

The base of the Space Taxi is a globe. Kent wanted it to be more realistic so he painted it using photos of the real Earth as a guide.

also shaded by applying a dark wash and drybrushing. The base, which is a nice representation of Earth, was also painted at this time. But I wanted to make it look more realistic, so for inspiration I dug through a couple of books for photos of Earth taken from space.

With all of the painting done, it came time for final assembly. All of the masking tape was pulled off and any residual painting errors were touched up. The windows were applied from the inside of the kit, and then the bulkheads were glued in. Any little gaps that occurred were filled via Krystal Klear or white glue. One of the spacesuited crewmen was test fitted into the forward cage and jockeyed around until he looked right. A couple of tiny drops of superglue secured him into position. To get a quick set, I used superglue to attach the cages. Once again, Krystal Klear or white glue was used to fill in any gaps. The driver was glued into his cockpit and the canopy put into place. Just to do something a bit different, I used some gold colored Bare Metal foil for the top of the canopy. Then the main body was coated with Future floor wax in preparation for decaling.

Notice that I hadn't glued the cargo door into place yet. There's a reason for that. The stripes on the fuselage and some of the graffiti are single piece decals that cross over the door. It's much easier to put these decals on over a hatch that is taped in the closed position and then trimmed. Then additional graffiti was added using an extra-fine tipped permanent marker. At this point it was okay to separate the cargo door from the fuselage. The markings were sealed in place using Future floor wax. After waiting for that to thoroughly dry, the fuselage was flatcoated using Polly Scale's flat coat. As a final touch, some dirt and grime was added using pastel chalks.

The final touches included gluing the cargo door on in the open position, gluing the kit to its stand, and adding the two tethered astronauts. This last item was not as simple as it sounds. The "tethers" were pieces of straight solid wire. You had to bend them in such a way that they appear to be floating in space. In other words, all of the bends had to be very smooth in appearance, no distinct angles. This usually means doing all of the bending right the first time because it is nearly impossible to straighten the wire out if a mistake is made. And the most difficult bends to make look realistic is the initial bend coming out of the ship and the final bend going into the astronaut. After this little task was completed, just superglue it into place and you are done

When all is said and done, this was a really fun project. The kit, for its age, isn't really a bad one. And it brings you back to an age of wonder, of optimism, and a time when you seemed to get a little bit more for you money. With a little bit of imagination, you could turn this kit into almost any type of space traveler that you could think of. Would I build another one? Good question. I rarely build the same kit twice. But in this case, I might just make an exception.

Kent has been building models since 1961 and has been a member 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.

The "tethers" were pieces of straight solid wire that Kent had to bend in such a way that they appear to be floating in space. All of the bends had to be very smooth in appearance with no distinct angles.

"Newstalgic" for the never was—a custom SSR

Continued from page 5

left out between the axle and the frame. Without the springs you can press the axle all the way to the chassis and glue it in place. Sure, the ride will be a little firm, but the stance is much improved.

The chassis was painted various sheens of black for visual interest. I made up a custom license plate by scanning a picture of a real plate and using Photoshop to change the numbers. I printed the plate on my inkjet at 600dpi.

This was a fun project to build and I have to complement Revell on a beautifully engineered kit. This is the best fitting Revell kit I have seen – it goes together like a Tamiya kit.

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 50's, 60's and 70's as well as aircraft from the period between World War II and Vietnam.

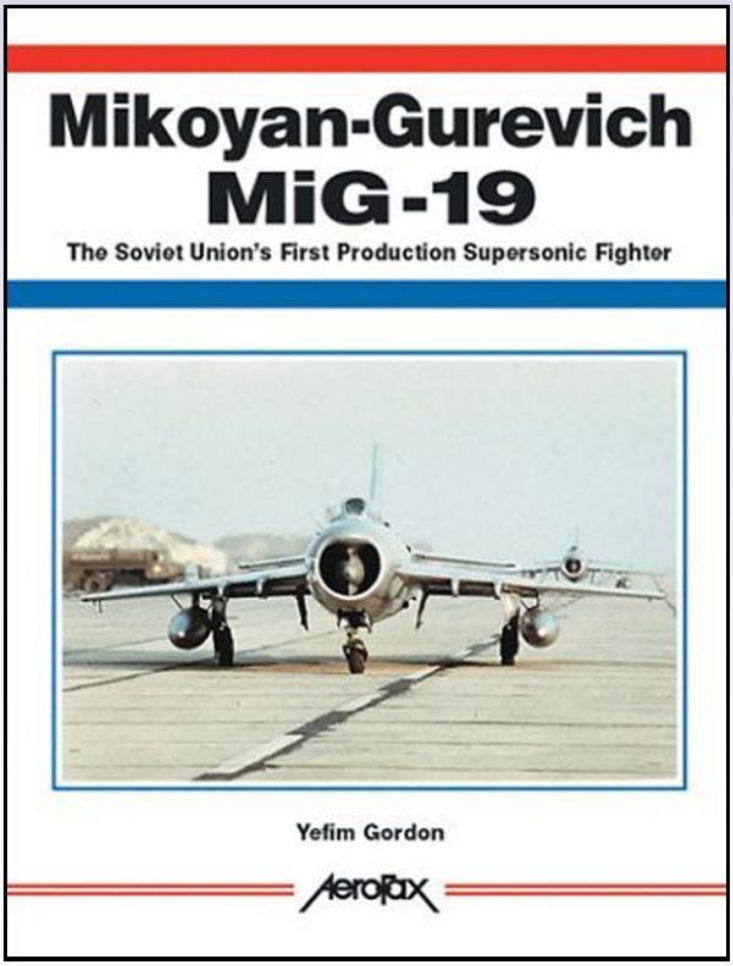
The SSR engine is box stock, painted aluminum with a black wash. The engine cover is painted Anthracite to match the body.

SVSM BOOK REVIEW

By Randy Ray

MiG-19: Day Interceptor & Two-seat Variants; MiG-19, S, SV, S-105, Shenyang J-6/F-6, JZ-6, JJ-6/FT-6, J-6I, II & III
4+ Publications, $26.98

Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-19: The Soviet Union's First Production Supersonic Fighter
By Yefim Gordon
Aerofax, $32.98



When I got back into modeling in 1989, after five or six years away, one of my big passions was cold-war Soviet jets. (I hadn't built my first tank yet.) Part of the allure of this was the scarcity of information. If you had any data at all, it was a commodity to trade with like currency at shows and club meetings.

Well, since the fall of communism in the former Soviet Union, if you can't find at least basic information on Soviet aircraft from that period, you aren't trying very hard. But there's a difference between "basic information" and "exhaustive reference."

The MiG-19 was the first supersonic fighter to go into production in the Soviet Union. The finished airframes first started rolling off the assembly lines in 1954. However, due to the development of the MiG-21, the production in Russia was short-lived, and by the late '50s production had ceased. But China continued to produce them for decades afterwards, and some of the Chinese models remain in operational service in Albania, Bangladesh and parts of China.

I saw the Aerofax volume on the shelves first. Even though my modeling tastes are more armor (and WWII) than they were in 1989, I still buy up most books related to Soviet jets from this period. And the MiG-19 is still one of the lesser-documented types. The MiG-15, MiG-17 and the hugely-mass-produced MiG-21 have all been given thorough coverage. But this latest Aerofax edition was the first (that I've seen) on just the MiG-19 since Squadron/Signal did an "In Action" volume.

Like the MiG-15 and MiG-21 books they've done, the MiG-19 book is large for a single-topic reference at 160 pages. It gives a very thorough history of the airframe from prototype and flight test-beds up to the variation that China implemented off of the basic design, the Nanchang Q-5 "Fantan." This book is rich in text and tables, of airframe numbers and provisioning to air units. It has 200 photos, both color and black and white. It also has a large number of line drawings, mostly side profile, but without a scale given. The book is a great reference by itself, but the main weakness is a lack of fine detail in the photos or the line drawings. There are numerous photos, many in color, of the different client-states' aircraft, with their differences in paint scheme and markings clear. But there are no detail shots of the cockpit, wheel wells, or any other aspect of the aircraft. The closest shots are of museum samples, most of which seem to have been long-forgotten.

In contrast, the 4+ volume on the "Farmer" is a lightweight 37 pages. It has 80 black and white photos, 20 color photos and 50 line drawings. As has always been the case with 4+, the book is light on history and heavy on detail. The reader is given just enough history to understand the place of the MiG -19 in the development of Soviet air strategy and airframe research. After this, the book dives into the detail. Almost all of the photos are close-ups. The cockpit, wheel wells, the wingroot-mounted cannon and the cannon mount in the fuselage are all covered. Variations in underwing stores are discussed, and many of the stores are shown in photographs as well. Unlike the Aerofax, this book doesn't mention the Q-5 Fantan at all. But if you are more interested in super detail than the operational history, you will want to have this book handy.

Overall, I recommend both books. If getting both is not an option for you, then consider whether you are more interested in the history or in building the ultimate MiG-19. If you aren't going to do a lot of detailing, and just want some background on other users of the aircraft, the Aerofax book is probably your best bet. If you plan on going to town on the old KP 1:72 kit, then you'll want the 4+.

Randy has been building models since 1973 and has been a member SVSM since 1997. Randy prefers to build soft–skin armor and figurines, but dabbles in almost all areas. Randy was president of IPMS/Denver, and was a second-vice-president on the e-board of AMPS for eight years, with a brief stint as acting president.

JANUARY MINUTES

At the January meeting, we discussed the upcoming Kickoff Classic and the issue of copyright and models (For more information on this subject, visit the IPMS/USA Website at www.ipmsusa.org). There was much discussion. Then it stopped and there was much rejoicing. Huzzah!

In model talk... Cliff Kranz acquired Dave Shirley's partially-started NF-104 Starfighter and completed it, paining it with Humbrol paints. Dave extended the wings and added the rocket motor, and Cliff gave him a lot of credit for his work. Thom Ivansco added Ace and Extratech brass parts to ICM's 1:72 I-16 type 24, but he's had some problems with the kit's decal sheet. Ron Wergin took a stab at Airfix's trusty Spitfire Mk. I, but he had a decal accident which set his progress back a little and forced him to repaint the plane. Ron likes to put pilots in his planes and promises a good home to any orphan 1:72 figures that may be out there. Ron also painted up some 1:35 figures, an old Monogram Marite Afrika Korps officer and a Tamiya SS tank crewman. Chris Bucholtz has inched his Academy P-38 slightly farther along, having re-painted the nose stripe and added detail and paint to the wheel bays. Kent McClure is still hard at work on his Monogram UFO, and he's picked out figures to provide a multinational crew thanks to some Airfix 1:72 figure sets. He's painted his flying saucer with a combination of Polly Scale, Ceramcoat and Apple Barrel paints. Kent also had a collection of Imex pioneer figures in 1:72, and he says they're nicely done, in harder plastic than in the past. Greg Plummer enjoyed himself building Revell's Escalade SUV, despite the kit's lack of an engine. He gave the white Escalade copper trim, a feature no Escalade actually has but which many Escalade owners would probably strongly desire. Andy Kellock's Challenger and GTO are on their wheels and are creeping up on completion. Andy has some work to do on their engines and a few other details to add. He also hunted down some rare models while he was in Australia for Christmas: Aoshima's "Mad Max" Interceptor, and a resin kit of the car it was based on, the XC Cobra, produced by Cavalier Kits. Gabriel Lee put his typical Venezuelan spin on Airfix's 1:144 727, finishing it as an Avensa airliner. Gabriel's also in the process of building Hasegawa's 1:72 T-34A Mentor as a VT-34A, an up-engined model that left service only recently, and he's completed Heller's Vampire as a Venezuelan fighter. Gabriel's also building a two-seat X-39 from a Hasegawa X-39 and a Testors F-5B, arming it and turning it into an XA-39. Don Savage took Johan's Rambler and used the new Model Master lacquer paints to give it an outstanding turquoise pearl paint job. Don had nothing but good things to say about the new paints. Richard Linder used the Mirage Renault VE minitank and a Russian limber kit to create a rather interesting combination of hauler and trailer. Frank Babbitt used Victory Productions decals on his Hasegawa 1:48 F-104 Starfighter to depict a German aircraft in the Bavarian special markings. Frank also used an Aires exhaust and a cockpit and set of tanks from Black Box. Frank also had a bigger Starfighter—in 1:32, from the Hasegawa kit and finished as a Taiwanese aircraft—and a smaller Starfighter—in 1:100, from the Tamiya kit, in preliminary SEA camouflage. Laramie Wright's "frankensherman" is an M4 that's evolving from his spares box, with an Italeri M4 lower hull, a Tank Workshop upper hull and transmission, a 75mm turret, Tamiya's engine deck and hatches and an Academy suspension. The model will depict an early production Sherman. Laramie's also enjoying his Tamiya A6M2; he overhauled the interior and made a new instrument panel using sheet styrene and a Waldron punch and die set. Chris Hughes' Hasegawa F4U-4 is coming along nicely, aided by a True Details cockpit, and he's already got his Christmas Gift Exchange gift—the Tamiya Merkava I—assembled. He says it goes together very well. Eric Mark worked wonders with Smer's Avro 504, removing the molded-in markings and giving it some cockpit details. Ben Pada's Hasegawa 1:48 F-104 Starfighter gave him troubles with fit, although it looks very nice with its Black Box cockpit and exhaust. Pete Long achieved great results through drybrushing and washes on his Tamiya Leopard A5. Pete says it's a great kit but a little expensive. Lou Orselli inherited a Combat Models R3Y-2 Tradewind from Fred Nelson, who did the hard part of cutting out the parts and gluing them together (and he made a really nice beaching dolly, too!). Lou plans on adjusting the engines, adding the cockpit and painting this behemoth. Buddy Joyce brought in two F3H-2 Demons in 1:72, one from the Emhar kit built by Braulio Escoto and the other an identification model. The tail on the latter is broken off and Buddy plans to fix it sometime soon. John Hayes couldn't leave well enough alone when it came to Trumpeter's 1:32 MiG-15; he's redoing the vertical tail and the air brakes, added a Black Box cockpit and a Cutting Edge splitter and is in general showering the kit with care. Jim Lund built his Airmodel 1:72 AJ-1 Savage in 1971, before there were references and whatnot! As a

Roy Sutherland won Model of the Month for his amazing Mosquito Mk. XIX. Roy converted the model from a Tamiya Mk. VI by adding two-stage Merlin engines and finished it as a plane whose finish has been burned off by exploding fuel from a German plane.

result, the cockpit in it is strictly from Jim's imagination. He also converted Italeri's C-119G into a C-119C like the one he flew on in Korea. This involved the replacement of the engines and the cowlings (using an Aurora 1:77 C-119's cowlings!), conversion of the nose gear to a single-wheel configuration, new propellers and other modifications. Shervin Shambayati's Academy P-47D went together well, but has since been plagued by bad decals. On the positive side, he says Revell's P-47D is a really good kit except for a few minor errors (like the way the bombs mount). He finished it in Free French markings. Shervin built a Macchi C.202 in 1:72 from the Hasegawa kit, doing a nice job airbrushing the "smoke rings" scheme, and built Hasegawa's 1:72 P-40N in the bright markings on the 15,000th P-40. Shervin also brought in a Heller 1:72 Dewoitine D.510, built from the Smer reissue. Shervin said it fit together rather well! Mike Burton's 1:48 Hasegawa F-104 will wear a white-and-blue

Jack Rigger won second place with his Takara Votoms combat suit. Jack added the cockpit and scratch built the shoulder rocket launcher.

Bavarian special scheme once it's done. He's building two other F-104s, both in 1:72 and from Hasegawa: the Italian F-104S with the Cat and Mice scheme and a Canadian CF-104. Mike's completed his 1:144 Revell E-2 Hawkeye, and he's also finished an Airfix Il-28 "Beagle" in the colors of an East German target tug scheme. Mike's trainer version of the Pe-2 now wears a camouflage coat; Mike started with an MPM kit. He's also got two Special Hobbies Lockheed Electras in the works: a completed version of Amelia Earhardt's ill-fated plane and a new Electra in progress. Mike's also keeping his hand in armor with a DML 1:35 North Vietnamese Army T-34/85. Randy Ray has the cockpit of Tamiya's 1:72 P-47D built up; Randy says these parts are good enough out of the box to make aftermarket kits superfluous. He's also making quick work of AFV Club's PAK 40 anti-tank gun, although he thinks the kit is a little overengineered. Randy's also looking forward to building Real Space Models' 1:72 Titan

In the non-aircraft category, Brian Sakai won first place with 1/700 Tamiya IJN Yahagi.

II ICBM, which includes two lengths of PVC pipe among the ingredients! And the Model of the Month goes to… Roy Sutherland, for his Mosquito Mk. XIX. Roy converted the model from a Tamiya Mk. VI by adding two-stage Merlin engines and the proper radar outfit in the cockpit. Then, he finished it as a plane whose finish has been burned off by exploding fuel from a German plane, using bare metal foil, ALPS-printed decals, wood paneling and a host of other techniques to complete the burned-off look of the aircraft. Roy also has a couple of RAF figures painted to go with the Mosquito in a diorama setting.

In our "Just Japanese" contest, we had many entries. Laramie Wright says Hasegawa's A6M3 "Hamp" is a beautiful kit. He built his in the markings of Japanese ace Takeo Tanimizu, and he painted the hinomarus rather than use decals. Greg Lamb built Tamiya's SRX6 motorcycle out of the box, using Italian red as the basis for the gas tank and applying a realistic "leather" look to the seat. Mike Burton's 1:72 Aviation Usk Ki-115 Tsurugi special attack aircraft finally succumbed to his determined attempts to complete it. Greg Lamb built his Otaki J2M "Jack" almost 35 years ago, painting the plane in a satisfying Pactra IJN green! Shervin Shembayati's 1:72 "Jack" was built straight

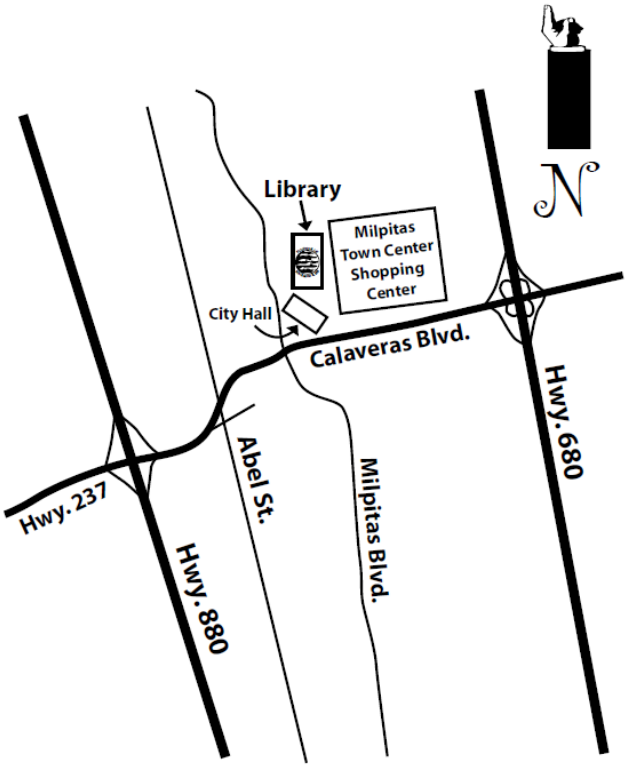
John Hayes won third place with his 1:2 scale Dark Angel figure. John sculpted the base and use metal foil for the jewelry.

from the box and wears a hand-mixed shade of blue-black on its anti-glare panel. Shervin also built a Testors/Hawk A6M5 for his daughter to play with and used similar colors as his Jack to finish it. Gabriel Lee built Speed Racer's car, the Mach 5, from the Polar Lights kit. Brian Sakai added metal exhaust guards and other small parts to Fujimi's 1:76 Chi Ha tank, and he built and painted his "superdeformed" Godzilla several years ago from a simple kit with no more that four parts. Brian also brought in the obligatory anime figure, this one a 1:12 Kaiyodo kit of Uchio from "Rama _," complete with a patterned dress that Brian meticulously painted by hand. Chris Bucholtz built his N1K1 in 1:72 from the Aoshima kit, and chipped the paint by first undercoating the model with metallizer, then scraping the IJN green paint off. Kent McClure finished his Fujimi 1:76 Chi Ha in captured Communist Chinese markings. His IJN manned V-1 launcher was based on destroyer hull and crewed by photoetched 1:700 figures. Kent also had two "Starblazers" spaceships present, each finished in a rather bright paint scheme. Anita Travis Polar Lights Godzilla was one of her first models; she painted and drybrushed it with Apple Barrel craft paints, then gave it a nice car to play with! Greg Plummer converted Tamiya's Mitsubishi Lancer to a right-hand drive car, then gave the whole car a coat of copper on the outside. Steve Travis built two of the Testors/Hawk A6M5 Zeroes: one straight from the box and the second as a racer wearing a coat of "go man go" orange. Steve also sortied his small fleet of 1:144 Japanese planes: a G4M1 "Betty," an A6M2 Zero, a B7A2 "Grace" and a Ki-44 "Tojo." Ron Wergin's entries included a Hasegawa 1:48 A6M2 in gray and a Monogram 1:48 A6M5 in green. Don Savage's Arii 1:32 1966 Fairlady builds into a really nice model when it gets a great paint job, as Don demonstrated. Cliff Kranz made an A5M "Claude" long before there was a kit, cobbling together a Zero fuselage, Ju 87 Stuka wheel spats, a T-6 propeller and lots of putty! Thom Ivansco's A5M came from an actual kit of the "Claude," the recent one by Fujimi. He added photoetched parts intended for a Zero to improve the cockpit. Ben Pada was typically brief in describing his entries, which included a Hasegawa Ki-61 painted using SnJ metallizer and acrylic IJA green and a Hasegawa N1K2 "George," built right from the box. And the winners were… In the Aircraft category: in third place is Ryan Ort's Hasegawa's A6M3, which wears a coat of Gunze Sangyo paint and is crewed by a well-painted figure from Tamiya. In second place, John Heck's N1K1 Kyofu survived a breakaway cockpit and other mishaps to become a truly beautiful model of the high-performance floatplane. And in first place, for his Hasegawa Ki-84 built straight from the box, is Ben Pada! In the Non-Aircraft Category, in third place was John Hayes' Dark Angel figure, which came from a Kaiyodo 1:2 scale kit, and John sculpted the base himself. John used bare metal foil for the jewelry on this figure. In second place, for his Votoms combat suit, was Jack Riggar! Jack used a Takara kit and added a cockpit that includes micro-milled floorboard and foot pedals and a scratch-built shoulder-mounted rocket pod with unused 1:72 Mk. 82 bombs substituting for rockets. And in first place, for his 1:700 Tamiya IJN Yahagi, is Brian Sakai! Brian has been working on this cruiser in spurts, averaging about six months between sessions, but the payoff is a beautiful model. Thanks to all who participated in our contest!

Ben Pada won first place in the Aircraft category. Ben's 1:48 Hasegawa Ki-84 was built straight from the box.

John Heck's Tamiya N1K1 Kyofu/Rex won second place.

Ryan Ort won third place for his 1:48 Hasegawa A6M3 with a rather nice pilot figure.



Next meeting:

7:00 p.m., Friday, February 18

at the Milpitas Public Library

40 N. Milpitas Blvd.

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