

# SPECIAL 2001 IPMS NATIONALS ISSUE



## THE STYRENE SHEET

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### Dogfight: managing Fujimi's A5M2 Claude

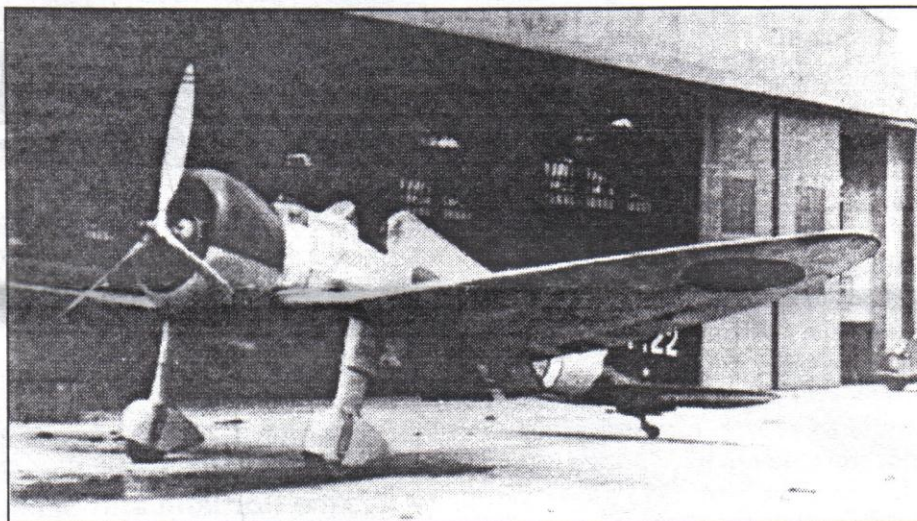
By Bill Ferrante

In 1932 the Imperial Japanese Navy issued a specification for a new carrier fighter to end their reliance on foreign-designed aircraft. Neither Mitsubishi nor Nakajima's prototypes succeeded in meeting the specification's requirements, so the Navy bought Nakajima's A4N1 biplanes as a stopgap and issued a new specification two years later. Under the leadership of Jiro Horikoshi, who later went on to lead the design team of the A6M *Reisen*, Mitsubishi produced a low-wing inverted gull-wing monoplane with fixed gear enclosed in spats. Powered by a 550hp Nakajima Kotobuki 5 radial, the prototype began flight testing on February 4, 1935.

The aircraft performed beyond expectations, easily surpassing the top speed requirement of 217mph by 63mph. All was not well, however, as the aircraft tended to oscillate in pitch during flight and balloon during landing. A major redesign followed, with the gull wing giving way to a straight one with trailing edge flaps. A variety of engines was tested, with the 580hp Nakajima Kotobuki 2 KAI 1 radial finally being selected, and the aircraft was placed into production as the Navy Type 96 Carrier Fighter Model 1, A5M1. Armament consisted of two 7.7mm Type 89 machine guns, mounted in the fuselage. The Allies, interestingly enough, thought the inverted gull wing prototype was another version and issued it the code name "Sandy."

The Japanese Army expressed an interest in the type, and Mitsubishi produced a single Ki-18, which was essentially an

A5M with the naval gear removed. Although faster than the Ki-10 biplane the Army was currently using, it was not as maneuverable. The Army requested an improved version that could match the Ki-10's maneuverability yet retain the Ki-18's speed advantage. This resulted in the Ki-33, which competed with the Ki-27 for the Army contract. The Ki-27 was more maneuverable still, so it won the production order.



This A5M4 of the 13th Rengo Kokutai was employed against the Chinese. Deliveries of this variant began in 1938.

The A5M series served in China during the Sino-Japanese War with much success. The tempo of operations helped to accelerate development. The A5M1 quickly gave way to the A5M2a, which featured a more powerful 610hp engine and helped to win air superiority for the Japanese. The A5M2b featured a 640hp engine and an enclosed cockpit. The enclosed cock-

pit was disliked by the service pilots and was dropped on later production A5M2bs.

The A5M3 was a version that used a 610hp Hispano-Suiza liquid cooled engine, but no production was undertaken of this variant. The definitive version was the A5M4. Featuring a 710hp Kotobuki 41 nine cylinder radial engine and fittings for a 160 liter drop tank, the A5M4 pushed the Chinese back even further.

The A5M4 remained in production until 1940, when it was superseded by the A6M *Reisen*. By the time the Pacific War started, the A5M had been relegated to second-line units and flight schools. A two seat version, the A5M4-K, was produced in small numbers. At the end of the war, most of the survivors were expended in Kamikaze attacks on Allied ships.

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

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the June 2001 Issue of the Styrene Sheet. Well, this month will surely be a busy one. Depending on when you read this newsletter, the Chino Contest will have been completed, and the IPMS/Santa Rosa contest will be occurring. If "first" contests in Region IX are any indication, the 2001 Scale Model Contest/Exposition put on IPMS/Santa Rosa will be another heavily attended and entered contest. The 2001 Scale Model Contest/Exposition will be held on Saturday, June 16,

## EDITOR'S BRIEF

Welcome to the annual nationals issue, and welcome to any first-time readers. We here in Silicon Valley are proud of our club, our newsletter and our fellow modelers, and we relish the opportunity to share with the rest of IPMS. We hope your nationals is rewarding, enriching and results in a lot of fun.

Speaking of contests and travel... A four-man team from SVSM made the trip down to Chino for the annual Planes of Fame contest. The editor won first in 1:72 single engine jets, and Mike Burton took a third in 1:72 multi-engine props. Angelo Deogracias and Jim Priete were along for the trip, although they brought no entries. The show, as always, had plenty of entries, and lots of additional things to see. For instance, seven P-51s were visible from the front of the hangar where the contest was being held! A *Tigercat* and a *Hellcat* each took off and did test-hops, and one *Mustang* was on jacks having its gear worked on. For an airplane modeler, it was the best of all possible worlds.

On the way home, however, the fun really started. After a stop at the Foster's Freeze in Firebaugh, Angelo's company car stopped running, stranding the four modelers in the middle of nowhere. It took several more hours for the group to get home, first hitching a ride in the tow truck to Los Banos and then getting a ride from the editor's wife, who spent her Sunday afternoon driving to the home of Donut World and "the missing link." All's well that end's well, however, and even Angelo, who stayed behind to await car repairs, returned safely.

Santa Rosa is this coming weekend; we expect a great show and a good turnout for this first-ever event from our neighbors to the north. Come to the meeting on Friday, get excited by the hobby, and let it carry over in Santa Rosa—it'll get you charged up for modeling for at least the rest of the month!

Finally, we should express our thanks to the modelers who contributed articles for this issue. Their enthusiasm has resulted not just in a great June issue, but the start of a great July issue as well. The editor doffs his hat to Bill Ferrante, Jim Priete, Bert McDowell, Brad Chun and Ron Wergin, whose work is in this issue, and Laramie Wright, whose contributions mean that armor will be well-represented next time. We're getting articles, but that doesn't mean you should stop writing; the more articles we have, the bigger the issues can be, and the more you'll get for your membership. If you have questions about how to contribute, ask the editor; if you have ideas you think would make good stories, then you have a standing green light to commit them to paper. Thanks, guys!

—The Editor

2001, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at The Finley Center, 2060 West College Avenue, Santa Rosa. You can also check their website at [www.puffer.net/santarosa.html](http://www.puffer.net/santarosa.html) for contest categories, and directions.

To make time even more valuable, the IPMS National Contest and Convention is just around the corner, being held in Chicago. I know of quite a few members that will be in attendance, and unfortunately, I won't be. For those club members who have not attended a National Contest, it is definitely awe-inspiring, and you get to talk models with modelers from across the country and the world. If you should get the chance, I highly recommend it. Your spouse, significant other, or bank account might not approve, as the vendor area is the largest hobby shop in the world for three plus days.

To those club members attending the IPMS National Convention, good luck, and bring home some trophies!

And don't forget, this month is the first internal club contest—Monogram Mastery!

Happy Father's Day, and Happy Modeling!

—Bradley Chun

## CONTEST CALENDAR

**June 16, 2001: IPMS/Santa Rosa hosts its first annual contest** at the Finley Center in Santa Rosa, California. For more information, call Dale Bohling at (707) 568-0496 or e-mail him at [nachtwulf@aol.com](mailto:nachtwulf@aol.com).

**September 22, 2001: The Captain Michael King Smith Evergreen Aviation Education Institute and the Portland and Salem chapters of the IPMS present their Fourth Annual Contest** at the new museum housing the HK-1 "Spruce Goose" flying boat in McMinnville, Oregon. For more information, call (503) 282-2790.

**September 29, 2001: IPMS Humbolt Bay/Eureka holds its annual contest.** For more information, call Melissa Stockton at (707) 4441-9433 or e-mail her at [moexu@hotmail.com](mailto:moexu@hotmail.com).

**October 6, 2001: IPMS/Vancouver hosts its 31st Annual Fall Model Show and Swap Meet** at the Bonsor Recreation Complex in Burnaby, British Columbia. For more information, call Kevin Brown at (604) 939-9929.

**October 14, 2001: IPMS/Orange County hosts OrangeCon 2001** in Buena Park, California. For more information, call Nat Richards at (949) 631-7142 or e-mail him at [ocipms@aol.com](mailto:ocipms@aol.com).

# Hasegawa gets the Spitfire IX right finally!

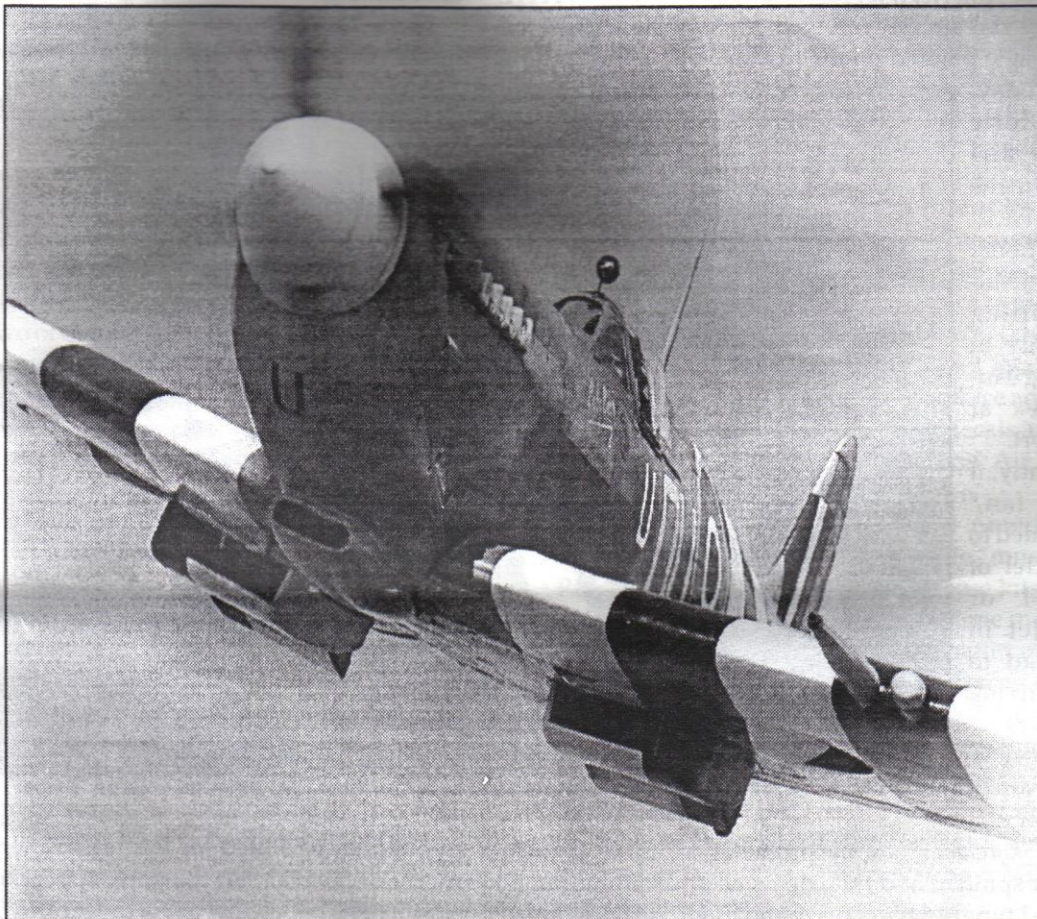
By Jim Priete

It's finally here: *Hasegawa's* long awaited *Spitfire IX* kit in 1:48 I'll spare you all the excess verbiage and get right down to it. Just be prepared for an honest review from a *Spitfire* fanatic.

What you get for your \$26 is the typical finely scribed surfaces that we have all come to expect from *Hasegawa* these days. The shape looks pretty good, and the cowling is about .030 wider than their earlier Mk. V kit, which fixes the primary

problem with the Mk. V. The added width definitely makes a difference. I noticed it as soon as I put the fuselage halves together. The length seems to be pretty much on the mark, I measured 31' 4", the exact dimensions for the Mk.IX. The wing span is two inches short at a scale 36' 8". As for the wing, a "c" type, the central cannon access hatch is separate, which leads me to speculate that there is a good possibility they will release an "e" wing kit and perhaps even an early "c" wing with the larger cannon blister.

Speaking of cannon blisters, the ones on this kit are not quite the right shape. They are somewhat football-shaped, being tapered at both leading and trailing edges. They should have a teardrop shape in plan view, rounded at the front and tapered at the back. *Hasegawa* has also seen fit to include the post-war wheel bulge on the top of the wing, and this is not correct. The upper wing surface was stretched slightly to allow extra clearance for the wider wheels, a difficult feature to reproduce, but the teardrop fairing should be removed. Lastly, the outer gun access hatches have been reproduced as raised panels, standing proud of the upper wing surface. I don't know why they did it this way, and the only solution is to sand them down flush and rescribe them, which means that you will need to replace the small blisters on the outer access panels.



A view of a *Spitfire Mk. IX* that few German pilots lived to describe. The Mk. IX was the most produced variant, almost by accident.

Included are the standard rudder and the enlarged rudder, both separate from the fuselage. There is no fabric detailing other than rib tapes, and these may be a bit overdone. I also think that the large rudder could be a bit more pointed at the top. The spinner looks good and the propeller looks very good; it's much beefier than any other four-blade Rotol kit prop that I've seen so far. You also get three wheel styles, three- and four-spoke hubs plus hubs with the wheel covers. All are separate from the tire to aid in painting, including the

back faces of the wheels, a nice touch.

You get standard and clipped wing tips as well as two types of exhaust pipes, fishtail and round. There are two types of tail wheels, standard and retractable, which means that they will be releasing a Mk.VIII later. The landing gear struts are not quite as nicely detailed as in the *Tamiya* kits, but the radiator baths are separate pieces, which means that they were

able to avoid the shape problem found on their 1:72 kit.

There seem to be more cockpit pieces, something that was definitely lacking on their previous *Spitfire* kits. An interesting feature is the "floor" piece, which is curved to represent the shape of the fuselage bottom, since the *Spitfire* didn't have a true floor to the cockpit. There are also two 250-lb. bombs with racks that look nice, and two styles of rear view mirrors! The decals are nicely printed, and the yellow and dull red colors look good, but alas, they are too thick and therefore not of much use.

In conclusion, I think that *Hasegawa* went to great lengths to fix some problems and to make this kit a real gem. It is without question the best Mk.IX around, in any scale, and maybe the second best *Spitfire* kit available, after the *Airfix Spitfire 24 / Seafire 47*. This is the kit that we have waited for and I think the wait was worth it.

# High Planes captures Conquest I in 1:48

By Bradley D. Chun

Undoubtedly, Darryl Greenamyer's F8F-2 *Bearcat* "Conquest I" is one of the most historically significant Unlimited Air Racers of all time. It was the most winning Unlimited in the first decade of the Reno National Air Races, from 1964 to 1975, and was also the National Champion in 1965, '66, '67, '68, '69, and '71—quite an impressive record, to say the least! For the 1975 Reno Air Races, Darryl Greenamyer secured the sponsorship of American Jet for his already-famous N1111L F8F-2 *Bearcat*. The aircraft received a new yellow paint job with a bald eagle painted on the fuselage and main landing gear doors. Today, this historic Grumman airplane resides in the Paul Garber Facility of the National Air and Space Museum, awaiting public display in the upcoming Museum Annex at Dulles Airport.

Until recently, if a air racer fan/modeler wanted to build a model of Conquest I or American Jet in 1:48, you had to start by modifying a *Hawk/Testors* or *Hobbycraft* F8F *Bearcat*, obtain a *Revell-Monogram*

1:48 A-1H/J *Skyraider* kit for the propeller, a P-51 *Mustang* for the propeller spinner, and then do some scratchbuilding for the Formula-1 type bubble canopy and modified deck/spine. There have been a few resin conversion kits produced over the years for modelers whom wanted a bit of assistance with their conversions.

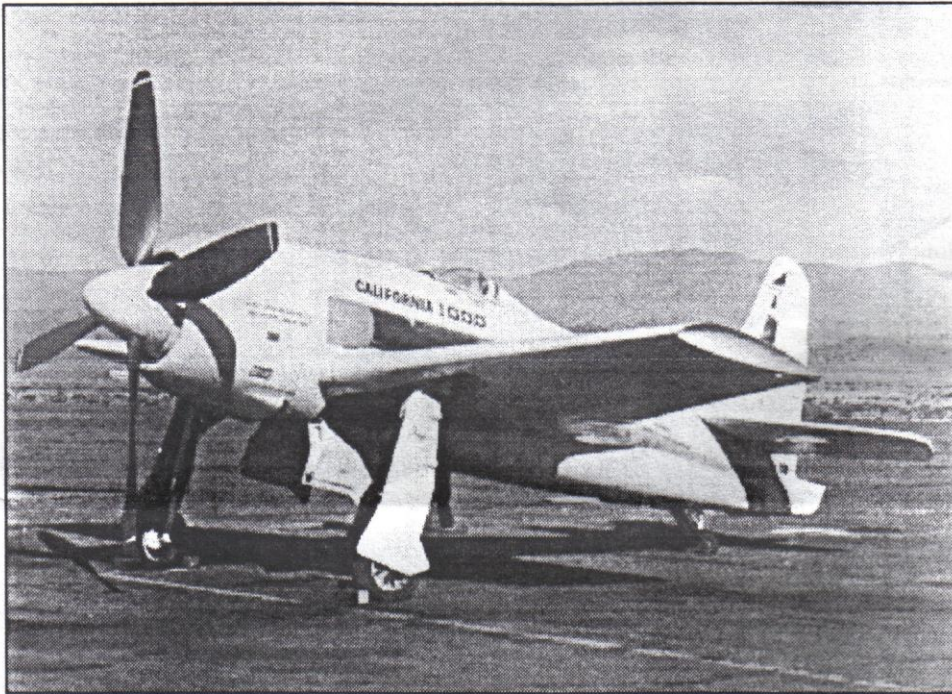
An Australian kit company, *High Planes*, has been producing Air Racers in 1:72, and is now producing kits in 1:48. Their first two 1:48 releases are of Conquest I and American Jet. *Nemesis* has just been recently released also 1:48. *High Planes* is also scheduled to release *Critical Mass 1996*, *Critical Mass 2000*, *World Jet*, *Miss Ashley II*, *Red Baron*, *Smirnoff*, and *Rare Bear*, all in 1:48.

Unlike some model companies, the *High Planes* kit is shipped in a very sturdy flip-top cardboard box. Why can't other model companies provide boxes like this? I know, I know, it all boils down to the bucks. The three main injection molded sprues are packaged in a zip-loc type plastic bag, and the white metal main landing gear struts and the vacuform canopy are packaged separately, in their own plastic bag. With the exception for the instruction sheet, and decals, the part contents of both kits are the same for Conquest I and

American Jet.

The instruction sheet consists of a few exploded diagrams and some construction and finishing tips. What has been provided should be enough for most modelers to build this kit satisfactorily. Modelers who have only a few kits under their belts might have trouble trying to build this kit, though. The reverse side of the instruction sheet contains the profiles needed for decal placement for the specific air racer that you are building.

There are approximately 40 pieces of injection-molded, light blue styrene parts (a *High Planes* trademark) on three sprues, at least with the kits I have purchased. As with most of the *High Planes* kits that I own, my initial impression is that the moldings appear to be a bit crude by today's standards, and this is evident by the fact that there are thick sprues and sprue gates, and that many parts have a good deal of flash on them. There is definitely some clean up involved with the construction of a kit of this nature, and this is not a kit



In her air speed record scheme, Conquest I basks in the Reno sun. She won here six times.

would not be suited for the "assembler." A closer examination does reveal that the parts appear to be very accurate in shape. The panel lines are of the scribed, recessed variety, and appear very fine. Some modelers may wish to rescribe these panel lines to suit their particular tastes.

I can't comment on fit, yet, but one observation I did make is that the engine cowling is molded to the fuselage halves. While the shape appears to be much more accurate in the shape area than of the *Hobbycraft* kit, the modeler may wish to separate the engine cowling halves prior to assembling the fuselage halves. This will allow the modeler to add the appropriate engine detail after the fuselage halves have been joined and to clean up the join lines inside the cowling also. There really isn't much detail seen once the spinner is attached, though. (I wonder how the *Obscureco* F8F-2 *Bearcat* replacement cowling will fit?) The fuselage has the T-33-style vertical fin fillet molded onto it also. This modification was added to Conquest I in 1969, and remains on the aircraft today. The wings are also molded "clipped" to their correct modified length and the flaps are filled in, too. The instructions also suggest that the modeler sand and file the concave shape into the wingtips for an accurate appearance. This can be easily

accomplished with the handle of an X-Acto knife or file wrapped with sandpaper. I also noticed that one of the fuselage halves also had some sink marks or molding flaws that will require some filling, sanding and maybe some rescribing.

As for the R-2800 engine, the modeler is only provided with the ends of the cylinders that are visible behind the spinner-mounting boss. There are no parts provided to mount the propeller and spinner for rotation or ease of removal for transportation, and the instructions call for them to be glued on solid. I'll probably install the usual brass rod and aluminum tubing to mount the prop and spinner. Also included, as separate pieces, are the four propeller blades. I'll have to check with SVSM resident air racer expert Mike Meek to see how accurate their shape is; they may need replacing as Conquest I had been fitted with the larger *Skyraider* propeller in 1965.

Conquest I was also modified with extended wing root fillets during an airframe retrofit in 1968. These are also provided in the kit as separate pieces and will be of assistance since the modeler will not have to make them from scratch. There are also six parts included that are not mentioned in the instructions. Two of them appear to be another set of wingtips, and the other four parts appear to be some type of ducting (maybe for the main wheel wells?). The instructions also point out that the wing root oil cooler inlets need filling and this area to be sanded to match the shape of the surrounding leading edge. It shouldn't be beyond the scope of most modelers to fill, sand, and re-shape this area.

A very basic seven-piece cockpit assembly is included. Even though there isn't much to see through the canopy, some modelers may wish to add some details to the cockpit area. The wings also have some nicely molded gear well details, but there isn't much, if any detail in the fuselage area of the wheel wells. The instruction sheet suggests mounting the inner gear doors in the closed position to hide this. I'm not really sure if this is "accurate" or not and will have to check my references to be sure.

The main landing gear doors have some nice detail molded on, but the white metal landing gear struts are what makes this kit really, really nice. Too bad *High Planes* doesn't release

them as an aftermarket accessory; I'd buy enough for all of my *Hobbycraft Bearcats*! The two-piece wheels are a bit crude and I will be replacing them with a set from *True Details* with the brake caliper detail added.

Before one begins trimming the vacuform canopy, one should take a really good look, or two, or three, before you cut out the canopy. The canopy contains part of the fuselage decking molded integrally with it. By carefully examining the fuselage and the instruction sheet, the modeler should be able to determine what needs to be removed, as only one vacuform canopy is included. I would have preferred to have two vacuform canopies included, as not all modelers have a steady hand or a really sharp Mk. 1 eye, myself included.

Decals are included for two variants of Conquest I, the all-white 1969 Reno Air Race paint scheme and alternative markings for the world speed record flight. The decals are printed in register, are beautifully printed by *Fantasy Printshop*, and are readable with some magnification. Since the airframe remained in this configuration from 1969 to 1974, with the exception of varying details from year to year, and eventually being painted silver, before being painted yellow in 1975 as *American Jet*, it would have been nice to include decals for its markings from 1969 to 1974. This would have allowed other modelers to build a slightly different model from your version. I doubt that someone will produce an aftermarket set in the near future. The *American Jet* decals are provided as the aircraft appeared at the 1975 Reno Air Races. The same comments apply to these decals also.

The *High Planes* Conquest I and *American Jet* unlimited *Bearcat* air racer models are definitely "must have" kits for the Reno Air Race fan. Even though these kits require considerable cleanup, I doubt that any big name model company will ever produce a kit of this subject matter or magnitude. Both kits are bit on the high side as far as the retail price is concerned, but *High Planes* has released a complete kit of this famous air racer, and has definitely reduced the amount of time required to convert a *Hawk/Testors* or *Hobbycraft F8F-2 Bearcat* into an air racer, should the air racer modeler continue to do so. I can't wait for *High Planes* to produce more of their 1:72 subjects in their 1:48 line. I know Mike Meek probably can't wait either!



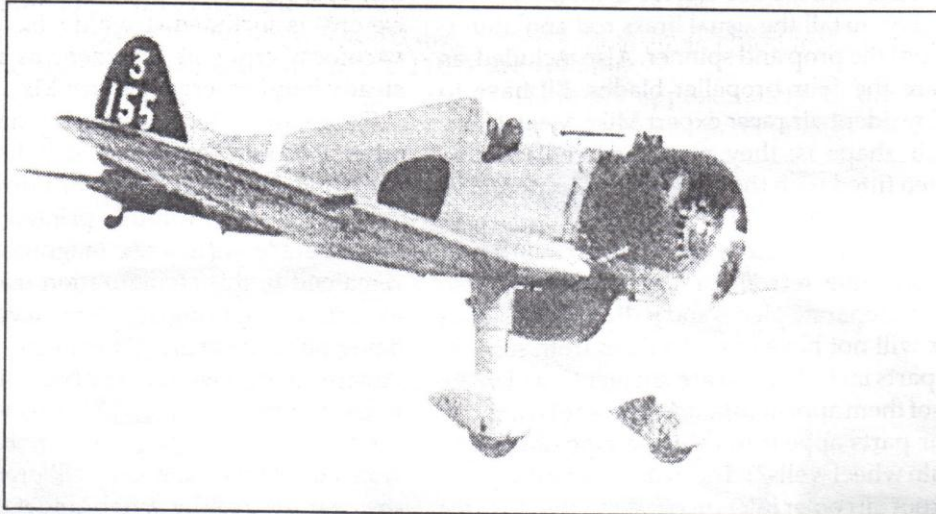
Pure horsepower: Conquest 1 gets a tow from an unusual source at the Mohave races in 1975. The racer now awaits restoration at the NASM

# Fighting with a fighter: Fujimi's A5M Claude

Continued from page 1

Fujimi produced the A5M in 1:72 in three versions. The first released was the A5M2a, quickly followed by the A5M2b, and lastly by the A5M4. The 2a and the 2b are the same kit, with different decals. The 2b is the later version without the enclosed cockpit. Unfortunately, the 2b had a larger windscreen which Fujimi does not give you, so you still have a 2a. The A5M4 kit has a new sprue that has the correct parts to do that version. In case you were thinking of using the windscreen from an A5M4 kit to do an accurate 2b, the fuselage shapes are different and the telescopic sight on the 2b did not go through the windscreen as it did on the 4. If you want an accurate 2b, start carving and dust off the old vacuform machine.

The 2b was released featuring the camouflage scheme the Navy applied to its land-based fighters during the Sino-Japanese conflict. The 2a is series of silver painted, red tailed schemes, and the 4 has some "gold" schemes. The 2b caught my eye, since you don't see too many Japanese aircraft with two-tone camouflage that is supposed be two different colors.



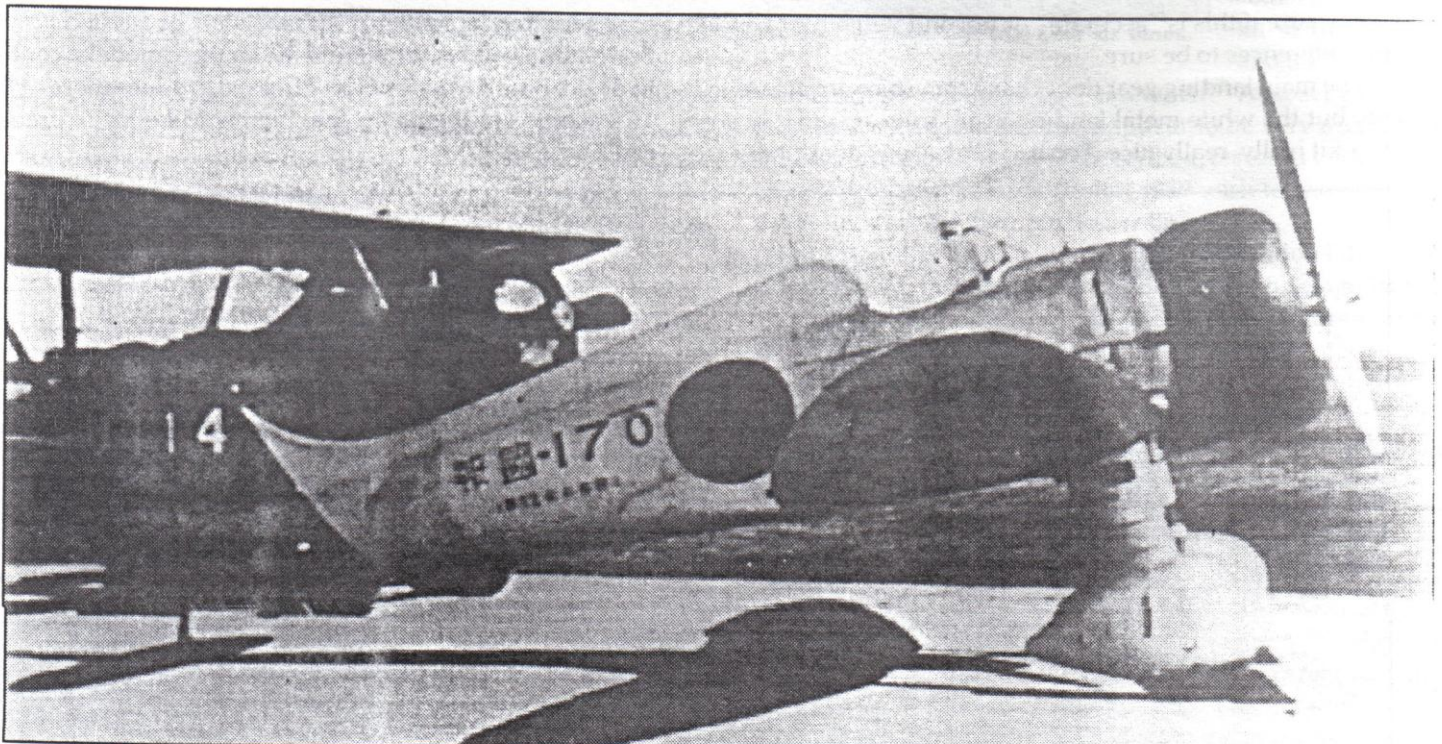
The telescopic sight is readily apparent on this A5M2. Note that the sight does not go through the windscreen but is instead positioned in front of it.

I just wanted a nice kit that would go together easily so I could concentrate on the painting—no extra cockpit detailing except seatbelt; a quick build. I picked the wrong kit.

The copyright may say 1996, but this kit is a throwback to 1976. Everything is fine until you get to step three in the construction. After gluing the wing halves together, I noticed how thick the trailing edge was. Break out the 220 grit. After thinning the edges, I joined the wings and fuselage. The fit was even worse. No matter how I tried to fit them, there was going to be a .030" step somewhere. The forward fuselage decking fit no better, with sizable gaps and steps, re-

quiring Mr. 220 grit to work his magic.

Thinking I might just have the Claude from hell, I broke out the 2a kit I had and taped it together. I found the same problems. When I attached the tail planes, the fit was fine but instead of the fine engraved panel lines found on the rest of the kit, these parts had trenches that would do Matchbox proud. It took several coats of primer to fill them in to an



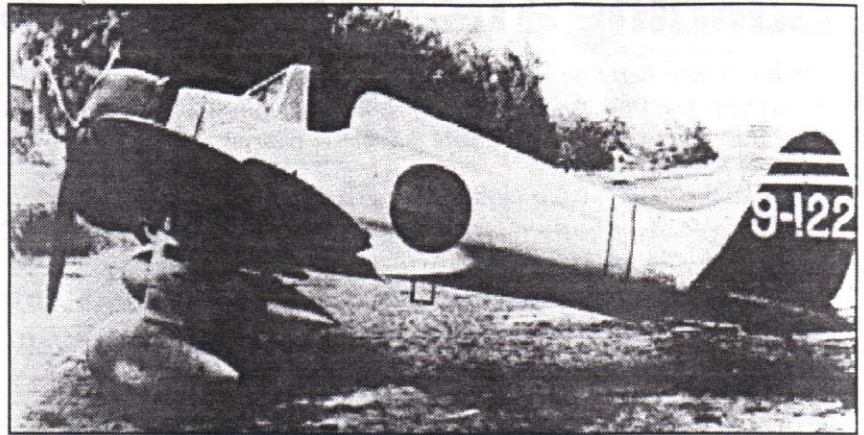
An A5M4 on display, showing the type's elliptical wing to good effect. Except for the A5M2b, the open cockpit was retained throughout production.

acceptable level. The rest of the kit went together very nicely. It was then of course when I discovered Fujimi's "omission" in providing the correct windscreen for the 2b version. So much for camouflage. Looking through the *Famous Aircraft of the World* # 27 on the A5M, I found a 2a silver paint scheme with an unusual anti glare panel and an aircraft number I could make with the 2b's decal sheet. So, now I have a silver bird with a red tail.

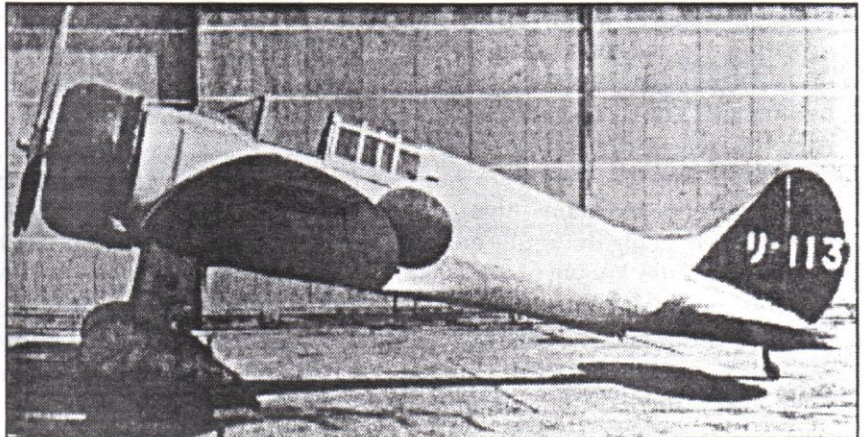
For paint, I used an ancient bottle of *Spray-n-Plate* that worked as well as I remembered it did. The red was *Model Master Insignia Red* with a touch of black to knock it down a bit. The decals were a combination from the 2a and 2b sheets and the whole thing was sealed with *Metallizer Sealer*.

Incidentally, I taped an A5M4 kit together and the wing-fuselage joint seems to fit much better as does the forward fuselage decking. You still get the thick trailing edges, though. The paint schemes for this version are a lot more attractive as well so you might want to consider this kit if you want to add a Claude to your collection.

All in all, these kits are a vast improvement on the ancient *Nichimo* kit, but *Fujimi's* desire to get multiple versions from the same mold appears to have created some nasty fit problems that take us back to days of platform shoes and a president named Dick. It looks nice when it is done, but I'm glad it is done.



A5M4 showing some of the features of later aircraft, including the drop tank and larger windscreen. The A5M4 saw only limited use against the allies.



The prototype A5M2, with the enclosed cockpit so disliked by Japanese pilots.

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This is how the IPMS/USA attracted new members in 1969. For information on how you can join today's IPMS, go to [www.ipmsusa.org](http://www.ipmsusa.org) or ask your chapter officers about becoming a member!

# Building a better *Bogue*-class escort carrier

(Editor's note: Bert first wrote about improving the *Bogue* CVE kits in December, 1998. Having finished his award-winning *Bogue* in the intervening years, Bert revisits the subject with additional firsthand wisdom!)

At the beginning of World War II, there was a need to resupply the forward areas with both Army and Navy aircraft, and the high command devised a method of delivery using small carriers. The Army's P-40s and P-47s, as well as the Navy's planes, would crowd the decks of these auxiliary carriers (AVGs) with just enough room to launch the first plane on the catapult. When the last plane left the deck, the ship returned to the U.S. for another load, repeating this rather mundane (though important) duty many times over.

During the carrier's design phase, however, the Royal Navy began using their small ships for convoy protection, fighting off U-boats and Fw 200 *Condors*. The AVGs (Auxiliary Aircraft Transport) changed to CVEs (Aircraft Carrier, Escort), indicating that they were going on the offensive.

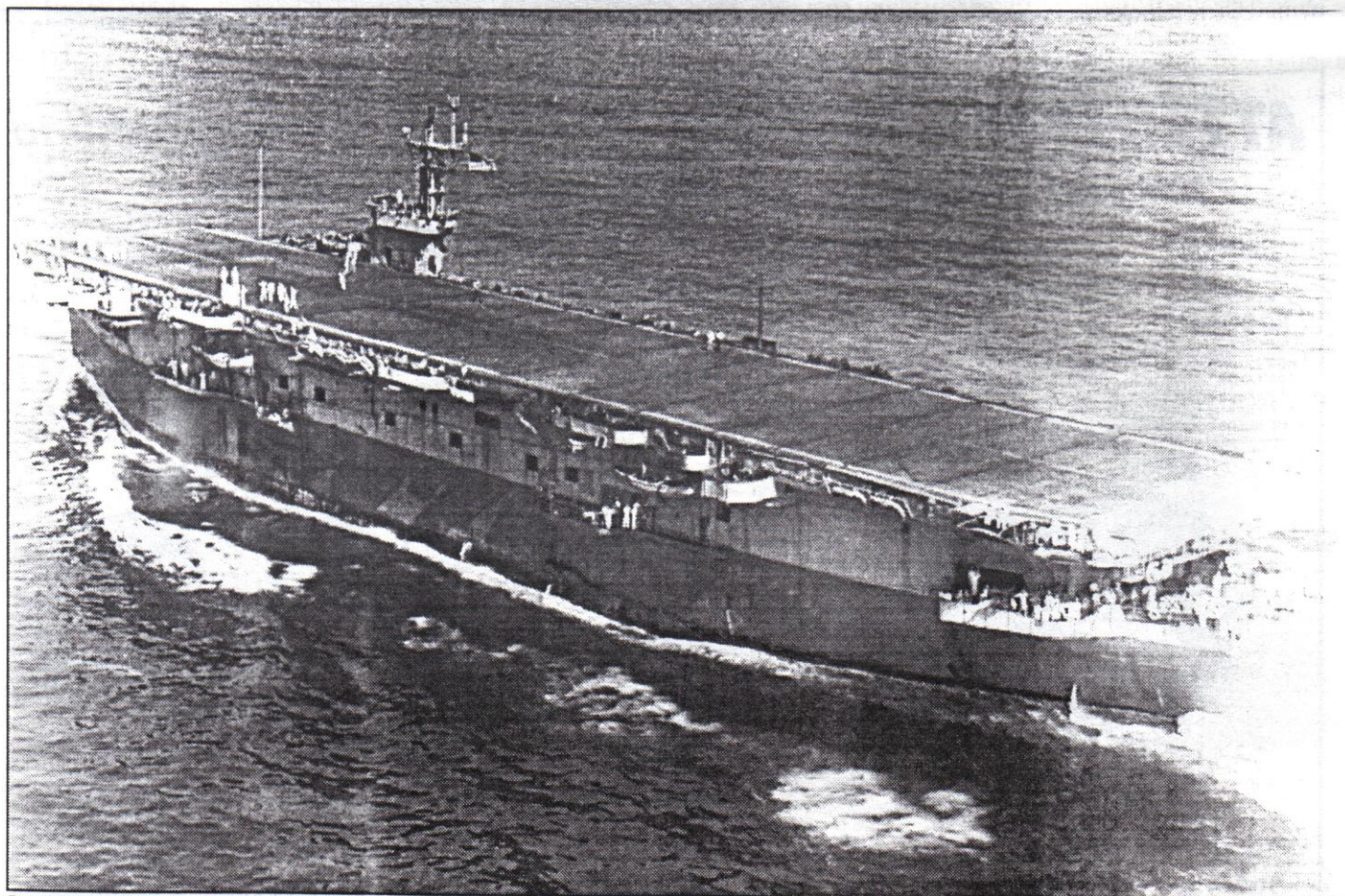
The Navy needed many ships fast, and the simple way was to build them using the ample quantities of the new C-3 type cargo hulls (later known as the Victory ships). Conversions were fast, and after a few experiments, the *Bogue* class evolved, offering an offensive capacity of about 30 aircraft or the capability of delivering twice that number to the battle areas. They also provided decks to qualify new pilots and later

furnished air cover for the island campaigns in the Pacific.

Building a *Bogue*-class CVE 9 in 1:700 was made possible first by *Sky Wave/Pit Road*. They offered two versions of the class, the U.S.S. *Bogue* and the HMS *Tracker* (kits #W-2 & #W-3, respectively). The kits differed in the style of bridge provided, but both could be used for the USN CVEs for either early or late versions. Both kits also furnished aircraft typical of those transported by the CVEs.

After a short absence, the kits reappeared in a new box by *Tamiya*. Evidently, they leased the molds from *Sky Wave* and improved the kit in the process. The hull, flight deck & superstructure are the same, but the armament trees have smaller 20mm and 40mm guns and better detailed aircraft (All USN types). Also, *Tamiya* leaves both bridge types on the tree to choose from. It's an improved kit, but there is some work a modeler could consider before starting, particularly if superdetailing is planned.

Since both kits are in the stores, I'll use the *Tamiya* part numbers, most of which are the same or similar to the *Pit Road* kit. The hull assembly begins with the bow and stern deck plates (A3, A20 & A21), and the base (A6). These, when assembled, will leave manageable seams to fill. I removed the molded-on detailing (Piping, vertical ladders, paravanes, etc.) from the hanger deck walls with a curved X-acto blade, being careful not to disturb the nearby window or door



*Bogue* underway in the Atlantic on June 20, 1943. This shot provides a good view of the after gun mounts and detail around the ramp.

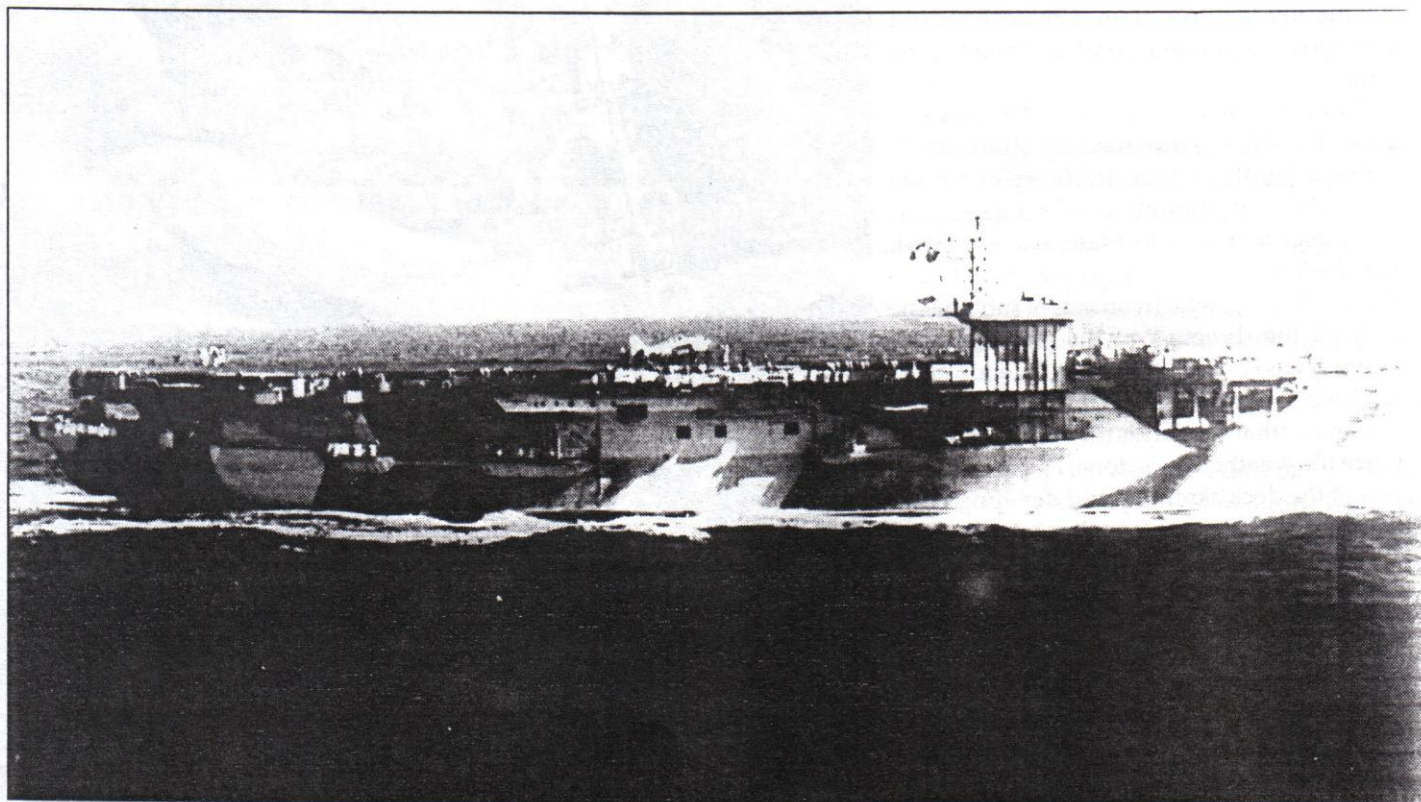
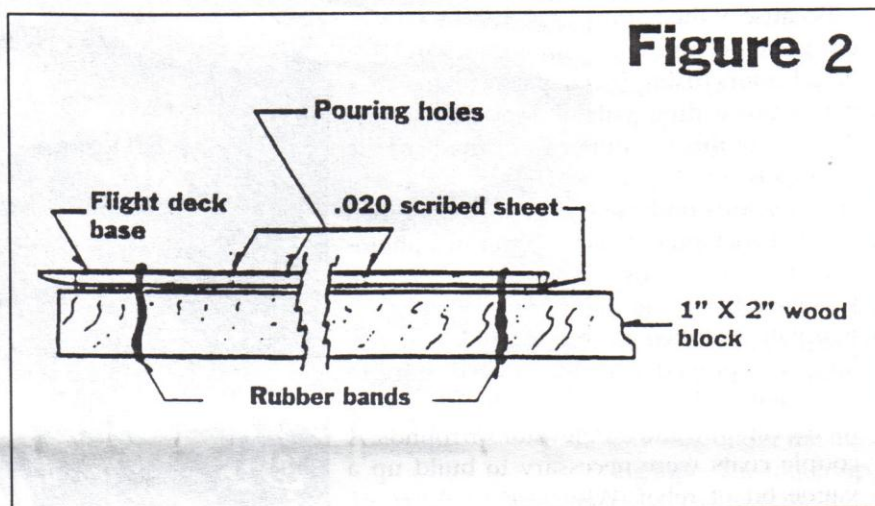
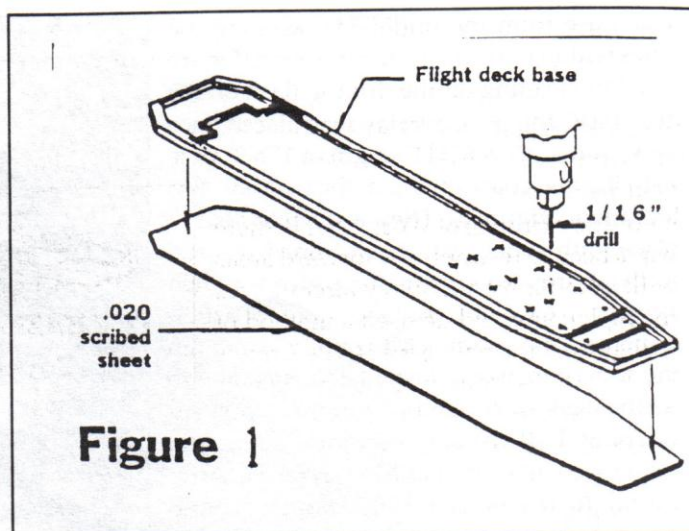


frames. I replaced this detail with brass rod and photoetched ladders. The paravanes came from *Pit Road's* equipment set #E-9.

Before adding the hangar deck walls (B33 to B35), I opened the roller doors to expose the hangar deck. Also, the heavy handed grating on the hull sponson decks should be toned down or removed. The late version of the *Bogue* I'm doing had no sponson 20mms, so their locating points were not retained.

Next comes the flight deck and, no doubt this is where many of us will part company. The kit's deck has some peculiar detailing; there are scored lines athwartship at about the same location as the tie-down strips in my drawings. If anything, these lines should be raised minutely with finely scribed lines between to represent planking. I chose to sand the deck down and apply an overlay of *Evergreen Scale Models'* catalog #2020 scribed styrene sheet to represent planking. After running a photocopy of the deck top, I cut the print out for a template and marked the outline on the scribed sheet (remember, the planks on USN carriers ran from side to side in WWII). I cut the #2020 a bit bigger than the kit deck (which I'll now call the deck base) and sanded the edges down carefully to get as perfect a match possible. I located the two elevators and cut them out, saving them for later replacement, and lined the openings with .010 x .020 plastic strip to represent the framing. The removed elevators were then sanded to fit the now smaller openings and replaced. I added plastic strip in the catapult slot as well. (doing all this on a flat surface before gluing to the deck base keeps the deck detail even and level.)

Next, I drilled a series of 1/16" holes in the



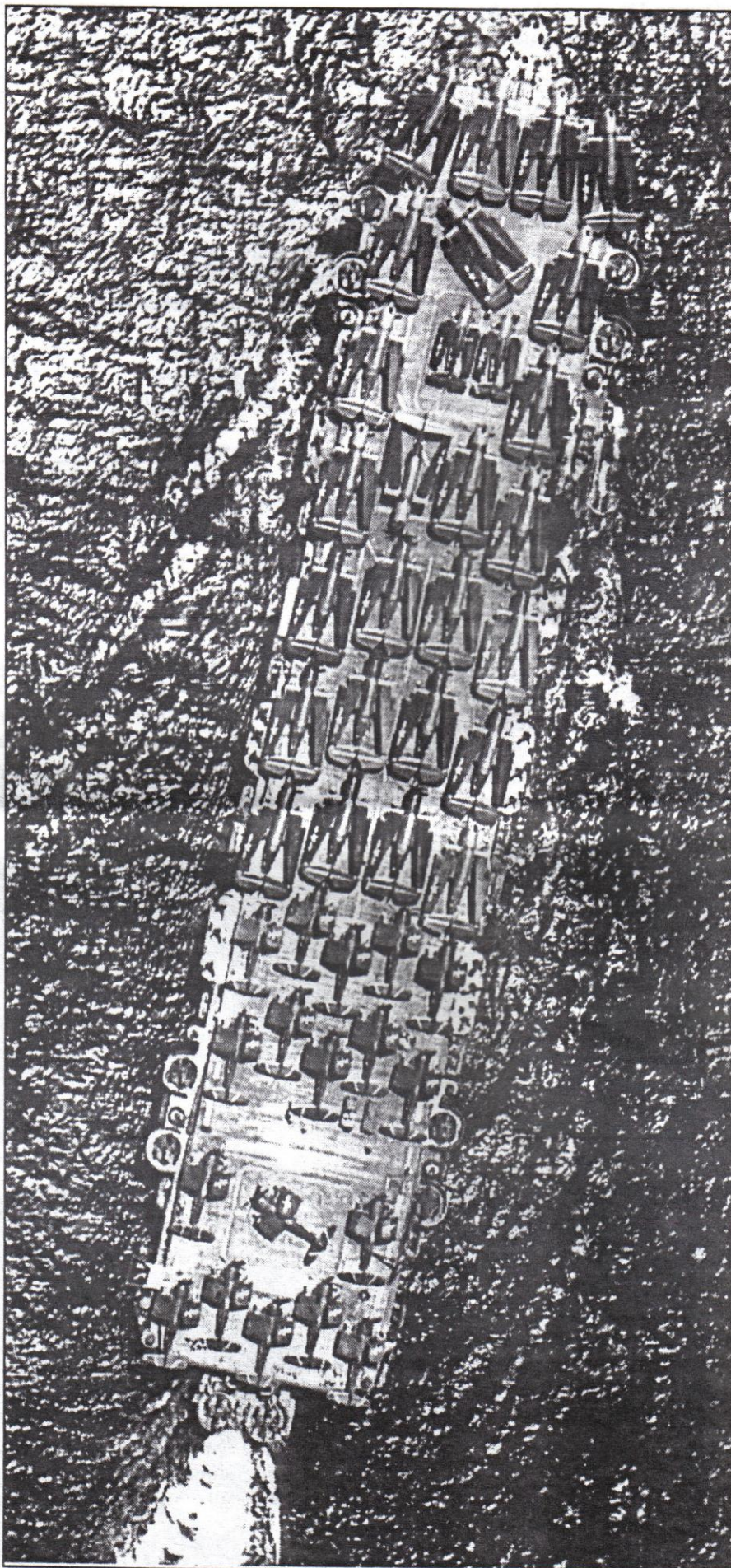
A profile view showing the remarkable Measure 32, Design 4A camouflage scheme that helped *Bogue* blend into the Atlantic in 1944.

deck base from the underside, keeping the holes within the hull line to hide them (Figure 1). After cleaning off the drilling flash on the deck base, the deck overlay was placed, face down, on a STRAIGHT length of 1" x 2" pine with the deck base on top of the overlay, also top down (Figure 2). They were both held in place with rubber bands and lined up perfectly. A drop of very thin superglue was then applied to each hole and the capillary action cemented the sandwich together. Although the superglue works fast, I felt it was safer to let the deck sit banded overnight to prevent warping. To then complete the deck I cut and cemented some .060 *Plastruct* styrene quarter round to the ends for the ramps (round downs).

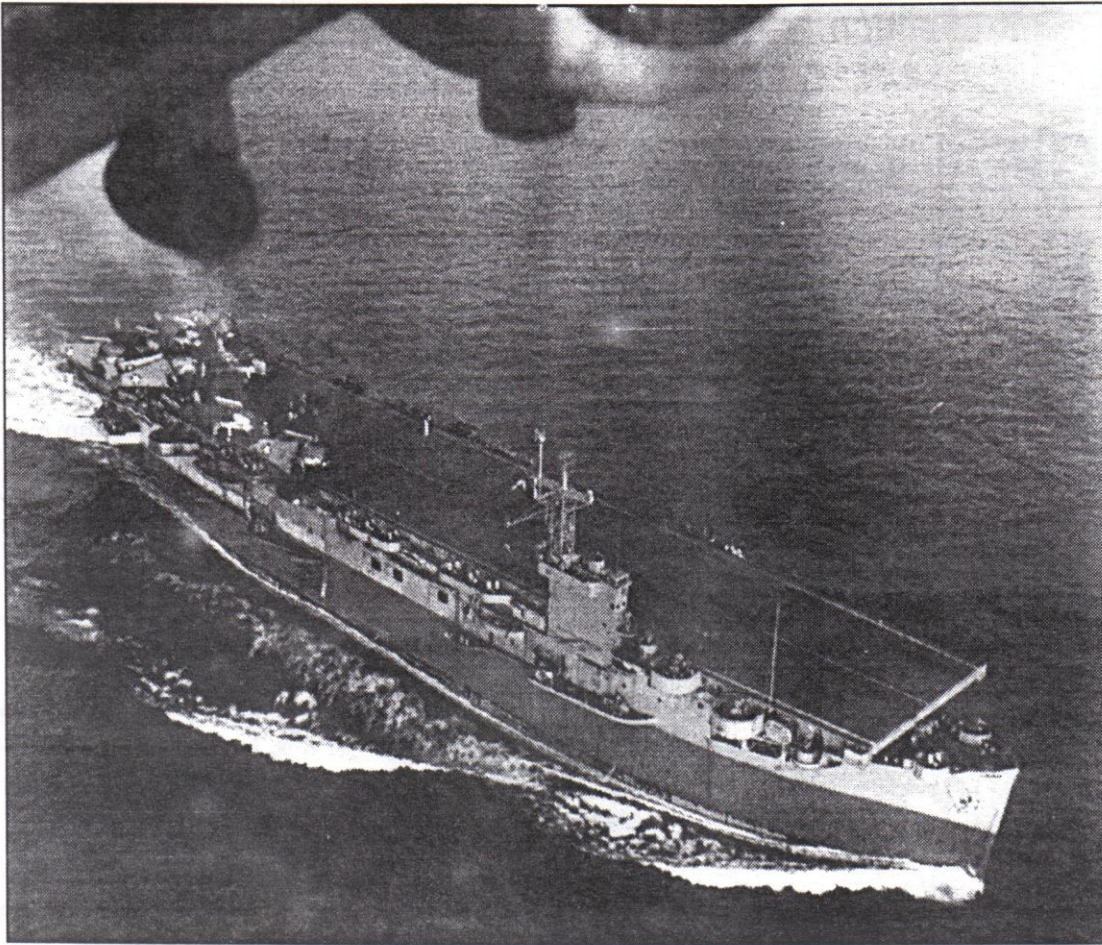
Because of the nature of the type of weathering I do, I continued by spraying a variety of wood colors (using *Floquil* paint) on the deck before proceeding with additional assembly. A series of three templates was made of the deck ironwork (tie-down strips, catapult and elevator surrounds) using an 8 1/2- x 11-inch sheet of stick-on type label paper in a photocopier. An old drawing board and T-square was used to cut out the tie down strips. The template was then placed on the deck (overlay) and sprayed with *Floquil* dark gray to represent steel. The same procedure was used for the catapult and the elevator surrounds. A couple coats were necessary to build up a vague bit of relief. Why *Floquil*? A strong paint would be needed to hold up when weathering the deck stain. The deck should now look like an undecorated, natural platform.

The deck stain was represented by *Humbrol* dark blue (HU-3 /Intermediate blue or #96), sprayed lightly in high traffic spots on the deck. The final painting was the dashed lines of the deck markings in white, also done with *Humbrol*. After a suitable drying time, I began the weathering, which consists of rubbing the deck in the direction of the planks with a white, nylon eraser. When the "wood" and/or "steel" starts to show through, ease up: remember that subtlety is the weathering rule. Once the weathering is done, I went on to the rest of the deck assembly and detailing without having to disturb it with masking tape.

I chose to model the 1944 version of the *Bogue* mainly for the paint job (Measure 32, design 4A), which was a four-color pattern with a series of feathered edges. I wanted to depict the ship in her most colorful time, when she was already on her way to becoming the champion U-boat killer in World War II. At this time, however, the *Bogue* also had a fourth pair of 40mm tubs added near the aft



**Bogue, with a full load of Navy aircraft on deck, sometime in WWII.**



**A view of the *Bogue* from one of the CVE's partners in U-Boat-busting, a class-K airship. As effective as the escort carrier's air wing was, it was the airship that had a spotless record of convoy protection.**

part of the flight deck (see plan view). Adding these new 40s necessitated the rebuilding of the kit's existing tubs, the walls of which are too thick. I used .010 strip for the new and existing walls. From here on it all went downhill. With a "why not?" attitude, I decided to re-do the existing 20mm gun tubs as well, and replace the catwalks with the new *Tom's Modelworks* #742 CV walks. These required small braces added to the bottom of the flight deck for support. By the way, these catwalks have the railings attached, making the angled-out feature of the *Bogue's* railings much easier to do. At least something turned out for the better!

The last part of the deck's work started with discarding part #B40. To represent the hanging walkway beneath the rear of the flight deck, I used a spare part from *Tom's Modelworks* set #700 for fleet CVs and cut it to fit. Parts #B37 can be discarded: I found no photos showing these items suspended from under the forward end of the flight deck.

Contrary to the instructions, I built the island superstructure last, and if there is any part of this kit that screams for brass detailing, this is it! The lattice mast, radar platform and radars from *Tom's Modelworks* #707 replaced the kit parts #B1 to #B3. I used part #B19 for the island's outside panel, which was braced during this later fitting. Of the two searchlight platforms (#A10 and #C5), only the front one should be installed. The bridge, part #B15, had a two-level wall which I cut off and replaced with .010 by .080 strip. All masts and yards were replaced with brass rod, as were the island supports #A17 to #A19.

A word about the lattice mast in brass: paint the inside (and outside if you choose) before adding it to the bridge. In my case, I assembled the complete item (lattice, platform and mast) before adding it to the bridge later. Ship modelers are always painting subassemblies.

At this time, I added the rest of the photoetched railings and ladders to the hull and flight deck and finished painting both.

As previously mentioned, the painting has to occur before assembly of the major components. The design 4A was used by many Atlantic CVEs and, in the *Bogue's* case, the pattern was followed quite closely (See figure 4 and starboard broadside photo). I usually paint the dark colors first because I have had paint occasionally leak under the masking tape. The touch-up of

dark colors doesn't show brush marks as easily as the lighter paints. Using this pattern, however, changed that because of the feathering of the 5N/Navy blue to the adjacent lighter grays. I used an airbrush, which was the only way I felt I could control the feathering. I paid strict attention to the closure of the masking to prevent leaks.

I painted the 5H/haze gray on the hull's lower sides first; then, after a suitable drying time, masked off the 5H and sprayed the 5L/light gray on the rest of the hull as well as the complete island superstructure. Later came the application of the small patch of 5P/pale gray on the upper central part of the hull. While the paint was in the airbrush, I painted the underside of the exposed portions of the flight deck with 5P also. Counter shading was generally white, but at this scale and with the photos showing little of no contrast with the 5P on the hull, I went with the 5P.

Next came the masking for and the addition of the 5N/Navy blue. I use a *Paasche* brand airbrush with an H-1 nozzle; not too fancy, but simple and reliable. I practiced doing faint applications where only the slightest suggestion of paint was being emitted. Once I was satisfied that I could do it, I started at the masking tape and applied a faint coat of paint as far as the pattern or photos showed. It looked almost like a slight wash. Next, I started at the same location again (at the masking tape) but stopped short of where I had finished before. I continued stopping short each time until the 5N was solid at the tape with a gradual fading off into the gray.

After all the vertical surfaces were done, I sprayed on the

# U.S.S. Bogue, 1944—1:700

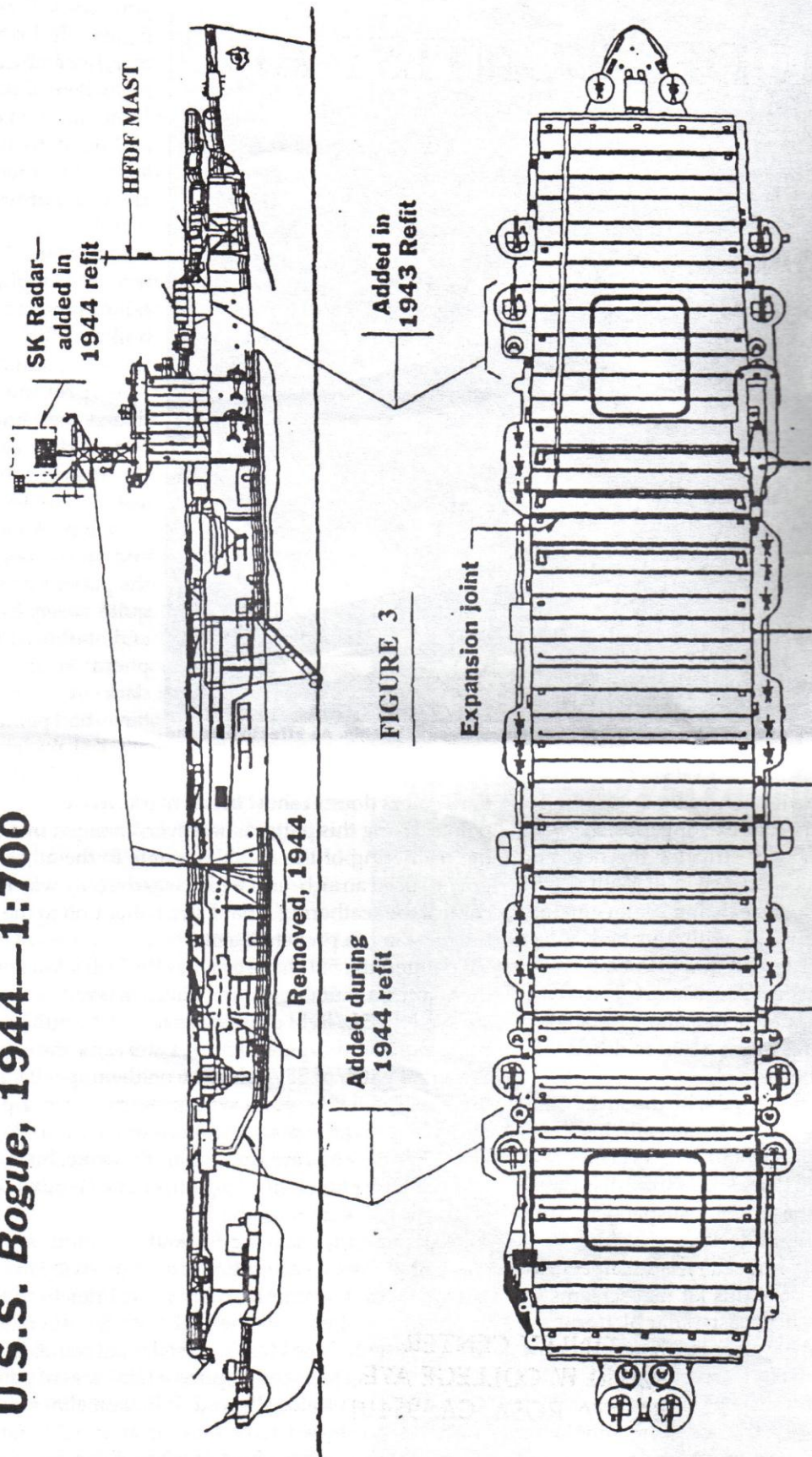


FIGURE 3

20B/deck blue on most of the deck, being careful not to allow over-spray to hit the gray-painted vertical surfaces. I brush-painted the 20B to the edges where the walls could not be masked or protected.

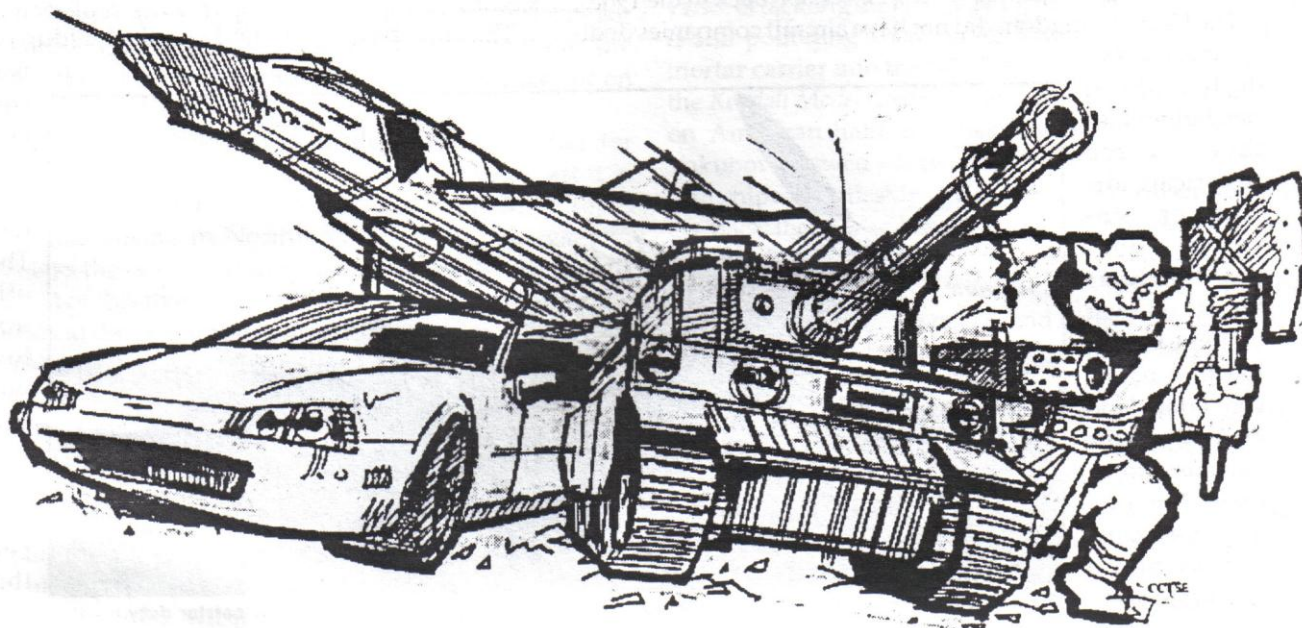
The stern-mounted 4-inch/38-caliber guns were then assembled and added to the gun tubs. The two 40mm mounts at the stern and the two 20mm mounts at the bow were then added also. I put an F4F with wings folded in the hangar deck (near an open door, of course), and the hull was ready to receive the flight deck. Since the deck already had all the photoetched brass added I took my time and moved slowly. Surprisingly, nothing got busted!

Next came the island/bridge assembly, and I was careful to leave no space between that part and the flight deck. The delicate lattice mast with the radars came next, touched off with a bit of rigging and signal flags.

The rest of the work consisted of the nitpicking small stuff, like the addition of the 20mm and 40mm guns along the light deck galleries, the arrestor gear (stretched sprue and brass parts from Tom's Modelworks set #707), a few F4Fs, and, of course, some of the figures representing the crew. Did you ever paint a face on a 1:700 figure? Wait until you're having a good day, okay?

That covers the few things I did to change a good kit into what seemed like a near-lifetime project. It turned out to be a real test bed for ideas to do things I never did in modeling before, particularly the camouflage pattern.

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# Revelling in Revell's 1:72 Sea Hurricane IIC

By Ron Wergin

Unlike Great Britain, the United States Navy benefited from the fact that there were several companies dedicated to the production of carrier fighters. Several excellent American carrier fighters were produced during World War II such as the *Hellcat*, *Corsair* and the Brewster *Buffalo*. Okay, so the Brewster was a dog, but I have been in love with the tubby beast since *Revell* released their 1:72 version back in the 1960s.

The United Kingdom did not have aircraft companies dedicated to the production of carrier fighters, so they utilized American aircraft or converted land-based fighters for use on their carriers. One of the first of the converted land aircraft was the Hawker *Hurricane*. The first *Sea Hurricanes* (nicknamed "Hurricats") were launched

from merchant ships, which were fitted with catapults attached to their bows. The goal of the Hurricats was to protect the fleet from roaming Fw 200s. The problem was trying to get back on the ship - once launched there was no way to return except to ditch the aircraft and hope that you would be picked up. Life jackets were obviously in great demand.

Soon conversion kits were produced to convert the standard *Hurricane* into the *Sea Hurricane*. Conversion of the Mark IIC into the *Sea Hurricane* began in March of 1942. However, the *Sea Hurricanes* use by the Fleet Air Arm was rather short lived as the *Seafire* soon replaced it as the front line fighter. Despite this, the *Sea Hurricane* continued to provide duty for antisubmarine use and for protective air patrols.

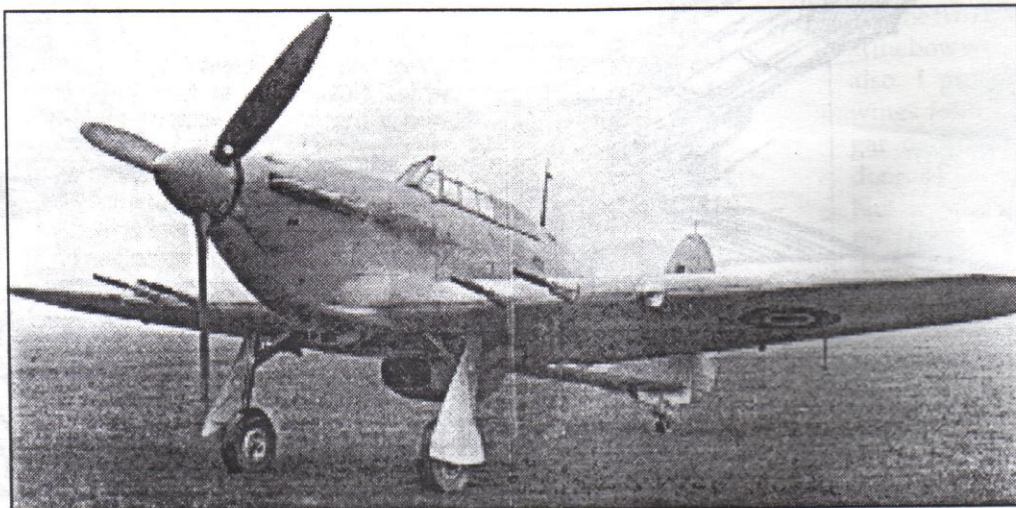
*Revell of Germany* has just released a 1:72 version of the *Sea Hurricane* IIC. What I found particularly interesting about this release is that there appears to be two current versions of the same model in different boxes with product numbers. The paintings on the two boxes are also not the same. Kit number 04184 shows a *Sea Hurricane* flying in the daytime. A local store was selling this for \$6.98, which is the going rate for a 1:72 *Revell* release. The other version shows the same aircraft at night and carries a model number of 04139. This version retailed for \$4.25 at the same store as the other more expensive version. Inside the box the kits are exactly the same. Now which version would you want to buy? At \$6.98 the kit is a bargain. At \$4.25 it is a steal, so I played the thief and pocketed a few. (A review of the *Revell Hurricane* IIB appears in the October 1999 Styrene Sheet—Ed.)

Most of the new *Revell* kits are excellent, and this new kit is

no exception. The outline is excellent. The spinner is correct and for once, the fabric effect on the rear fuselage is not over pronounced. Anyone who has built the Mark IIB *Hurricane* will find this kit familiar. The original parts are there, plus those needed for the *Sea Hurricane*. The cannons are all exquisite in detail. The propeller lacks the proper cant, but I found that it could be made acceptable by twisting the blades slightly.

The only snag I could find was the buildup of the wing.

is a five-part assembly that needs about 10 fingers to get just right (Ior have eleven). There is a pair of halves for the upper and lower outer wings and central lower wing section that these are attached to. I recommend that you use small tabs on the side the vari-



Many *Sea Hurricane* IICs were completed as *Hurricanes* and then converted for carrier duty.

parts so that there is something for the wing to attach to on the center section. Without this, I put the parts together and held the model alone once I felt it looked right. When I came back about 30 minutes later, gravity had done its dirty deed and the wing was a little droopy. To remedy this I just sat and held it until the glue dried a bit. This is not something I would want to do again. A fast drying glue like *Tamiya* thin would be a help. I was using nontoxic glue, which took forever to dry but may save my life but it killed my patience.

The kits come with two possible versions: one is *Sea Hurricane* of Number 760 Naval Air Squadron in the usual scheme of extra dark sea gray and dark slate gray, and the other is white with an extra dark sea gray and dark slate gray panel on the cowling. This is the version I chose since I find the white scheme a challenge. White should be an easy color to paint but it is one of the most difficult to pull off. I found that *FS 36622* (*Gunze Sangyo* number 311) is excellent for painting white in 1:72. It is not too bright and looks just right in scale.

I also tried something different when I painted the anti-glare panel. I first hand painted the extra dark sea gray and dark slate gray and then used fun tack to create a spray line, which is clean, but still has that airbrushed look. When finished with the fun tack just roll it into a ball and it is ready for the next step. I also use this for full camouflage and it works perfectly.

The kit is excellent and I particularly like the price tag on the nighttime version. I look forward to *Revell's* next *Hurricane* version, probably a land based Mark IIC since this kit already contains most of the parts.

# MAY MINUTES

At the May meeting, held at scenic Scenario Hobbies in Fremont, President Brad Chun announced that his three-month absence from the club would not be taking place after all, since the ATF was only going to give his police agency one dog. That means Brad won't be going out of the area for training, and will thus be able to head up our meetings.

Also, the June meeting will be back at the Los Altos Public Library, Thanks go to Greg Plummer for securing this site for our meeting. Efforts are being made to get the Milpitas site back, but they are being hampered by a lack of a janitor on Friday nights at that library.

In model talk... Mike Meek made a new propeller for *Minicraft's* 1:144 Boeing 377, and had Bill Ferrante cast it in resin to give his model better looking windmills. Mike hopes to finish his Boeing in Northwest Airlines markings. Lou Orselli says the only good thing about the *Kor Be 4* is the box art! The fit of this flying boat is bad, the shapes are rough and the decals in the box are supposed to go on a MiG-3! Still, the duck-like airplane was taking shape thanks to Lou's efforts. Paul Burnett took the somewhat toylike *Lindberg Godzilla* and transformed it with a professional-looking pint job, starting with a black primer coat and drybrushing green over that to bring out the texture of the skin. He then airbrushed the fins, which were a problem; once off the sprue and away from their part numbers, they all looked the same! To finish the model off, Paul gave his monster a die-cast airliner to munch on. Chris Bucholtz wasn't fully satisfied with his *Tamiya Spitfire*, so he re-did the windscreen and sliding canopy, added pastel weathering, chipped the wing roots with a silver pencil, and rigged an aerial made from a strand of smoke-colored nylon from a pair of panty hose! Chris also has his *Tempest* fuselage almost ready to seal up, complete with the *Obscureco* interior set inside. Bill Ferrante battled through the tribulations described in his article to finish his *Fujimi A5M2a "Claude"*. The last problem came when the cowl cracked as he was trying to fit the engine into it! Bill's also experienced some fit problems with his *Academy* 1:72 MiG-23, but he says he expected that to be the case. Kent McClure is still not sure about the final markings for his Space Taxi, but that did not stop him from adding controls and other details to the cockpit and painting the figure. Kent also built an *ArmorCast* proton gun, and painted the sci-fi weapon using *Polly S* metallics, and an *Omega* 1:72 BTR-152, a nice kit that has a good interior that ends up being largely unseen once the model is closed up. Roy Sutherland's *Tamiya* 1:72 *Mosquito* NF 14 is almost done, still, he hopes to have it done before the Santa Rosa contest. He's also putting time into a long-delayed Fw 190 rammjager, to which he's added wing fillets and the tailplane. Cliff Kranz has cranked out another oldie but goodie in the form of the *Revell P6M Seamaster*. He painted the model in seaplane gray, and his model still needs some touch up flat black around the edges. The entire interior of Mark Schynert's *SuperModel* Bv 138 is scratchbuilt, and he now plans to join the fuselage halves once the vacuformed clear parts he ordered from *Aviation Usk* arrive. In the meantime, Mark is working on a very rudimentary kit from *Modelist* of the Polikarpov 185, which lacked an interior and has require much superglue to

close the joints. Bob Miller's finished 1:700 monitor M.29 made an appearance next to Bert McDowell's Japanese cruiser *Tama* to emphasize just how different in size two 6-inch gun-equipped ships could be. Rodney Roper used his airbrush for the first time on *Italeri's* 1:72 OH-58 *Kiowa*, and got further practice with the rather more difficult camouflage scheme on his 1:72 F-20 *Tigershark*. Rodney's building his skills in advance of tackling the *Hasegawa* F-104S *Starfighter*. Eric McClure is still pounding away on his conversion of a *Tamiya* M21 mortar carrier into the M3 75mm gun motor carriage, using the *Kendall Model Company* set. Eric says the Hunnicutt book on American halftracks has helped quite a lot. Vladimir Yakubov showed off two turn-of-the-century Czarist Russian ships, a battleship and the armored cruiser *Ruric*. Cruisers back then were bigger than battleships, something the two models illustrated vividly. Both kits were from *Cambri*, and suffered from concave decks; Vladimir removed the deck detail, rebuilt the decks, and drilled out the casemates. Vladimir also scratchbuilt a Russian ship of the era with a slightly less attractive design, an 1870s coastal monitor that was completely round! The hull cam from a kit, but the rest was so inaccurate that Vladimir made it himself. Vladimir is also devoting a lot of scratchbuilding efforts on his latest *ICM* TB-3, changing the shape of the nose and the tail to more accurately depict the fighter carrier version of the plane using a second TB-3 as a source of corrugated sheet plastic! Aaron Pfau enjoyed building *Tamiya's* F4U-1A *Corsair*; he says it fits together well and has good cockpit detail out of the box. Laramie Wright describes his late-war M4A3 Sherman in the article in the upcoming July issue. He built the tank using some of the detail techniques he used on his M4A3E2 Jumbo. Equipped with a startlingly bright air-ID panel, the Jumbo was on the table, as was Laramie's latest project, a *Tamiya* Mathilda, which he says has huge seams that need filling. Laramie textured the turret with *Mr. Surfacer* 500, altered the angle of the front armor plate, and plans to add lots of other details to the model before it's done. Greg Plummer completed a *JB Models* 1:76 Bedford Mk. 4 truck and dressed it in weathered white United Nations markings. This rare foray into military modeling earned Greg an award at the biennial Salt Lake City car contest. Greg's also working on converting his second *Tamiya* World Rally Car into a street rod, this time turning his attentions to the *Tamiya* Mitsubishi Lancer WRC car that will become a "Euro Low Rider." Ron Wergin completed the *ICM Spitfire* Mk. IX in the familiar markings of "The Fargo Express," using Fun Tack to mask off the camouflage scheme, only to find good color photos that could have helped him make the painting more precise. Ron also built the old *Tamiya* Panther kit as instructed by the kit directions (right down to the motorization!), and painted up 1:32 figures of Civil War general John Buford of Gettysburg fame and a British infantry figure from *Tamiya*. And the Model of the Month goes to... Sami Arim for his 1:700 H.M.S. *Belfast*! Sami started with a resin kit from the Czech Republic, then replaced most of the small parts and reshaped the bow. Many of the smaller details were provided by the *White Ensign* photoetch sheet.

**Hey! Note the new/old location!**



**Next meeting:**  
**7:30 p.m.,**  
**Friday,**  
**June 15**  
**at the Los Altos**  
**Public Library**  
**13 S. San Antonio Rd.**  
**For more information, call the**  
**editor at (408) 723-3995**  
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