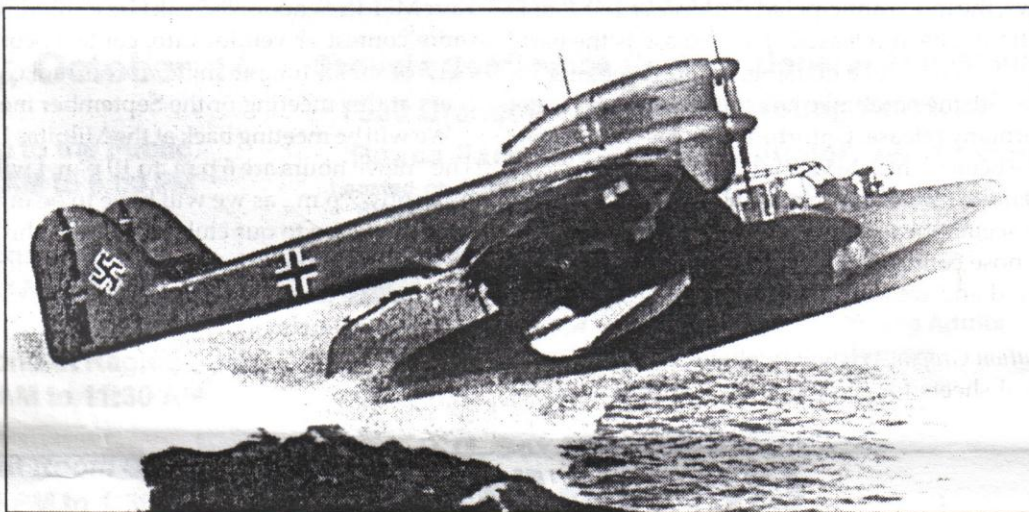


Twin-boomed tri-motor: The Bv 138 in 1:72

By Mark Schynert

Aircraft designers have often deviated from the conventional in an effort to gain advantages or better suit an aircraft for a particular role. During World War II, one approach taken by a number of engineering teams was to resort to twin booms for a single- or twin-engined aircraft, as, for example, the Lockheed P-38, in order to concentrate forward-firing armament, or the Fw 189, to maximize visibility for a tactical reconnaissance airplane. Designers of medium bombers or transports also sometimes went to a trimotor configuration instead of the more typical twin engines, for the sake of redundancy or



A Blohm und Voss Bv 138 comes 'unstuck' at the crest of a wave. 'Flying clogs' performed maritime patrol and rescue work, and also served the U-boat fleet by shadowing convoys.

to compensate for relatively less powerful engines; the Savoia Marchetti family of aircraft and the Ju 52/3m come to mind. However, there is only one airplane from this period that had both twin booms and three engines, the Blohm und Voss Bv 138. Despite, or perhaps because of, this unusual combination, it was effective in its role as a maritime reconnaissance flying boat for the Luftwaffe. Not surprisingly, it looked like nothing else; its nickname, "the flying clog," was pretty descriptive. One may fairly describe it as ugly, but in an intriguing sort of way.

When I'm inclined to build a big model, it will probably be a flying boat. Three years ago, I built the *Mach 2 Do 26*; this January, I got the bug for a big model again, a consequence of picking up a copy of *Supermodel's* 1:72 kit of the Bv 138 via E-Bay. This molding, about thirty years old, is the only kit of the Bv 138, and given the subject matter, probably will remain so. The good news is that the kit is injection molded, to a much higher standard than *Mach 2's* Do 26, and the major components look to be correct in outline. The bad news... Well, read on.

As always, research was the first step. Fortunately, there is a decent amount of information on the Bv 138. William Green's *Warplanes of the Second World War (Volume 5, Flying Boats)* (1961), his *Warplanes of the Third Reich* (1970), and his article with Gordon Swanborough in *Air International* Vol.17, No.5 (November 1979) have valuable exterior photos and drawings, including a cutaway drawing in the last-mentioned

reference. One could rely on these alone if the interior appointments of the kit were more accurate. As the kit interior is both sparse in detail and mostly wrong, I purchased a Polish profile, *Wydawnictwo Militaria #64, Blohm und Voss Bv 138*, by Janusz

Ledwoch (1998). This gives a half dozen or so interior photos, though of marginal value with regard to the flight deck, two more cutaways, and various other visual material. Unfortunately, it is written mostly in Polish, with some terse English captions here and there, but we always buy this stuff just for the pictures, right? Apart from the sources I used, there is also a Schiffer book and perhaps another monograph, neither of which I have seen.

Despite the major-production injection molding, this kit has a lot of conspicuous seams which, combined with raised surface detail, promised to require a lot of work to resolve. I began with the beaching trolley included in the kit; this was a harbinger of what was to come, for the tubular components were not well-engineered, requiring substantial amounts of superglue to round out the joints. Furthermore, photos showed beaching trolleys completely unlike the one in the kit, so I wonder if it's authentic. Still, once assembled, it did fit the hull, and all four wheels met the ground.

On to the main event. I started with the booms, and im-

Continued on Page 8

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the August 2001 Styrene Sheet. As many of you already know, I have become the "least popular" president in the recent history of this club due to the problems of not having a permanent place to meet each month. I wish we had a guaranteed place to meet each month so that we wouldn't have to give the membership a week's notice or less of where the meeting will be each month. I have only received a few responses so far as to where the membership would like to meet. Maybe someone in the club will win the Lottery and have a special building built just for our club? I know the decision to not have the pizza party is not a favorable one, but it will depend on where we meet and the amount of time we are allowed to stay. Also, there will be details in the next few Styrene Sheets with rules about the gift exchange. Stay tuned.

In model news, the much anticipated *ProModeler* 1:48 F-86D *Sabre Dog* has finally been released. This release is the early version without the parabrake housing. If you're looking for the late version with the parabrake housing, you'll need to get the *Revell* of Germany release. Unfortunately, the decal sheets I have seen have been of the late variant. I'm sure those of you who have attended the IPMS National Convention were getting tired of seeing the test shots! Some early reports have stated that the nose cone shape is a bit suspect, but the kit is nicely engineered and we should be seeing some on contest tables soon.

TwoBobs Aviation Graphics (www.twobobs.net) has also released two decal sheets for the *Hasegawa* 1:48 A-4 *Skyhawk*.

They are of adversary schemes and one of the sheets contains markings for "Jester's" Scooter from the movie *Top Gun*.

For the "road-trippers" in the club: IPMS Phoenix is having their show on Saturday Sept. 8 at the Holiday Inn Hotel at 1600 South Country Club Road in Mesa, Arizona. They will have over 60 categories for awards as well as special awards. You can go to www.ipms-Phx.Iwarp.com for more info.

Speaking of contests, our next club contest will be in October. The subject of this contest will be "Air Racers" and "Missiles of October." Let's show Mike Meek that there are others in the club that build air racers beside him. In Region IX, IPMS Silver Wings will be having their contest in October also. Their contest is titled "The Missiles of October—the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1963," and will be held on Oct. 14 at Kerr Middle School, 8865 Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove, CA. For more contest or vendor info, contact Scott Bell at (916) 428-7217 or email him at snjmodprod@aol.com. I'll try to have fliers at this meeting or the September meeting.

We will be meeting back at the Milpitas Library this month. The "new" hours are 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. I will start the meeting promptly 7 p.m., as we will have to be out by 10 p.m.

A thank you to our club members, who have been writing articles for our newsletter, and a special thank you to Angelo Deogracias, for taking notes at the July meeting!

Happy Modeling!

—Brad Chun

CONTEST CALENDAR

September 8, 2001: **IPMS Phoenix** holds its **annual contest** at the Holiday Inn Hotel at 1600. For information, go to www.ipms-Phx.Iwarp.com or call Richard Christ at (480) 483-7131.

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.

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.

October 14: **IPMS Silver Wings** hosts its **annual contest** at Kerr Middle School, 8865 Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove, CA. The theme is "The Missiles of October—the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1963." For more contest or vendor info, contact Scott Bell at (916) 428-7217 or email him at snjmodprod@aol.com.

November 3, 2001: **Antelope Valley Group** hosts the **Desert Classic V** at the Antelope Valley College Cafeteria, 3041 W. Ave. K, Lancaster, California. Special Awards for best 1941 Subject and Best X-Plane. For more information, call David Newman at (661) 256-6359 or e-mail him at dnewman@as.net, or call Mike Valdez at (661) 258-1278 or e-mail him at mikentina@prodigy.net.

THE ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLASTIC MODELER'S SOCIETY
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DATE & TIMES	LOCATION	ADMISSION
Sunday, October 14th Open to the Public 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Vendor Setup 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM	Sequoia Conference Center 7530 Orangethorpe Ave. Buena Park, California Located on Orangethorpe between Beach Blvd. and Western Ave. Exit either 5 or 91 Freeways at Beach Blvd.	General Admission \$ 5.00 Young Adult, Age 13-17 2.00 Junior, Age 12 & Under Free* *When accompanied by a paying adult Model entries, Adults \$ 1.00 each Young Adults Free Juniors Free
Model Contest Registration 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM	IPMS Orange County P. O. Box 913 Garden Grove, CA 92642 (949) 631-7142 e-mail: oc ipms@aol.com	
Contest Room Closed 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM		
Awards Presentation 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM		

36 Vendor Tables
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Vendor Tables: 30 x 96 in
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Turning a Nissan Cefiro into a Euro lowrider

By Greg Plummer

Here in car crazy California, personalizing your vehicle is as popular as ever, but with the supply of '32 Fords and '57 Chevys a little short these days, the youngsters are using whatever's on hand—mostly Hondas. You've no doubt seen their efforts on the street—lowered Civics and Integras with large wheels and chromed “coffee can” exhaust tips. Air dams and spoilers applied deftly to the body, or hammered on with staples. Tinted win-

dows. “Powered by Honda” (Duh!) stickers. Clear tail lights. Large tach on the A pillar. “Calvin peeing on something” decals in the back light. Carbon fiber doo-dads here and there. In rare cases, the engine may have been bumped up in power.

Done well or done poorly, these cars are popular. The trend is hot in Europe and Asia as well; in fact, some of the most extreme examples of the genre can be found in Japan. The polite term for these customs in the U.S. is Euro Lowrider or Euro. Yes, these cars are mostly Japanese, but the styling trends they follow originated with the performance tuners of Europe, such as AMG and Koenig, and with the rally cars of the same continent. The more common but derogatory names for these vehicles usually involve the word rice; I'll just stick to Euro.

Done well or done poorly, these cars are popular. The trend is hot in Europe and Asia as well; in fact, some of the most extreme examples of the genre can be found in Japan. The polite term for these customs in the U.S. is Euro Lowrider or Euro. Yes, these cars are mostly Japanese, but the styling trends they follow originated with the performance tuners of Europe, such as AMG and Koenig, and with the rally cars of the same continent. The more common but derogatory names for these vehicles usually involve the word rice; I'll just stick to Euro.

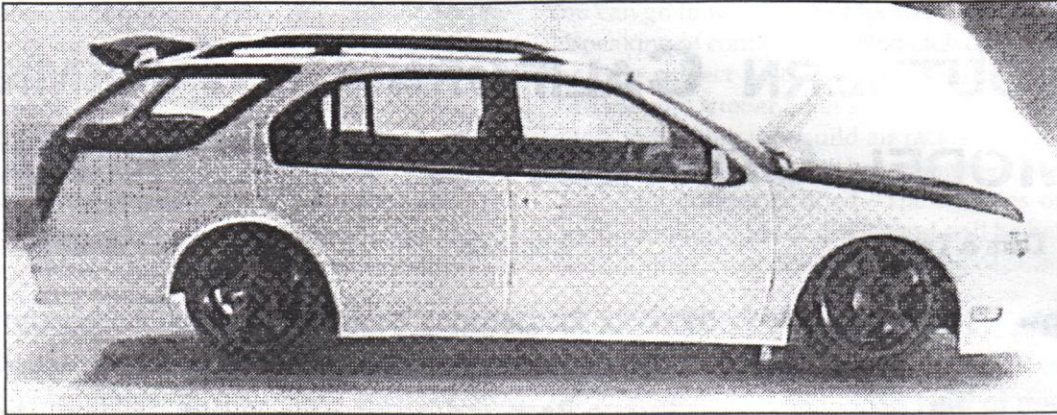
Revell has released an Integra kit under the “Hot Hatch” line. Hot Hatch is a real but fairly rare term outside of *Revell*'s line; don't call 1:1 cars “Hot Hatches”—you'll look silly. What is surprising is that *Revell* took so long to release such a kit. I don't have actual numbers, but it seems to be *RM*'s best selling model in quite a while (it's also one of the first of *RM*'s glue kits to be made in China). *Fujimi* has also just released a trio of Civic kits in an attempt to stay afloat. Kids like these models just as they like the full size items. Like it or not, lowrider kits are one of the few ways to get the younger public interested in the hobby.

I have the *Revell* kit and it's a fine model, but I wanted something a little different than the typical Honda. I ordered *Fujimi*'s Nissan Cefiro wagon kit from Hobby Link Japan. The '94 to '97 Nissan Cefiro is a mid size rear wheel drive sedan and is better known in the States as the Infiniti I30, although the wagon body was not available here. This is not to be confused with the '98 and up Cefiro, which is known as the Maxima here, with a different-trimmed model still serving as the Infiniti I30—I think. Japan's “name game” can baffle the best of focus groups. This particular kit came as the “25CruisingG” version (Nissan's highest trim level for the

wagon), with air dams, a spoiler, and custom wheels, so out of the box the model is already decently “Euro.” 25CruisingG probably sounds real cool in Japan.

Euro Lowriders, just like more traditional custom cars, have various levels of modifications. What is common to all is

a lowered stance and aftermarket wheels. Add on airdams and spoilers are also nearly mandatory, although these can range from near stock to wild, sculpted creations. Interior modifications



A tricked-out little Nissan: Greg Plummer heavily modified this Fujimi Nissan Cefiro

range from an add-on tach and shifter to a full upholstery job and roll bar cage. The typical paint job is monochrome, but there are Euros with plenty of graphics and stickers. And finally at least the exhaust tip, if not the whole system, must be changed on the quintessential Euro.

My plan for this model included a non-stock monochrome yellow paint job, non tinted windows to show custom colored upholstery, larger wheels and a lower stance, and, of course, exhaust tips. The moulded on air dams and kit spoiler were tastefully restrained, so I decided not to add anything in this department. As stated before, Euros come in many flavors, so one could “go over the top” and add huge aero skirts, roll cages, and bright graphics to this or any car kit. Just remember—subtlety is good taste, so don't add too much “subtle.”

Looking over the kit, I found the one-piece body to be fairly well done, with all the lower aero skirts moulded in place (many kits require the builder to glue them on). All the main parts were done in white plastic, the best color choice for a car kit in my opinion. The small decal sheet is also of good quality.

It goes down hill from there. *Fujimi* must have been hitting rock bottom when they cut the molds for this kit. As is typical for most Japanese car kits, it has no engine. The interior is too shallow and simplified with only nine parts total. The front seat backs are moulded open and there is no rear cargo area—only a flat piece representing a cargo area cover. The chassis is even more toy like, with one piece front and rear suspensions and metal axles. (This is not as bad as their third generation Prelude kit—it had a one piece chassis with a drive shaft and differential on the rear axle—the Prelude is a front wheel drive car.) The chromed wheels and rubber tires are nice but too small—more on that later. Since we're going to have fun with this kit, none of these shortcomings are to be taken too seriously. Besides, if you want a Nissan Cefiro 25CruisingG wagon, and I know you do, this is the only game in town.

First, the body was painted. There's no sense in building a

good interior and chassis only to mess up the body work—gloss paint is tricky, you know. The body was painted with a couple of coats of *Tamiya's* TS-16 Yellow directly out of the spray can. A little rubbing and some wax gave a smooth finish. On the hood, however, a few fisheyes showed up. *Tamiya* spray is sensitive to contamination, so be sure to wash and prep the plastic before you paint.

Entire hoods made of carbon fiber are showing up on full size Euros, so I decided to replicate this feature on the wagon. I applied a carbon fiber decal from scale motor sports with enough Micro-Sol to choke a goat. There were a few small wrinkles at the edges when the decal dried, but considering how thick these decals are I was satisfied. After the decal had dried I coated it with Future applied with a brush.

All of the black trim, including the regrettably moulded-on roof rails, was masked off with Scotch tape and sprayed with *Model Master* semigloss black. The front light buckets were painted with *Testors* chrome silver—when applied with a very wet brush this paint gives a satisfactory reflection. The rear tail light areas were flat enough to use *Bare Metal* Foil. I painted the tail light lenses with *Tamiya* clear red, but if the tail light buckets were better moulded I would have left them clear. Clear tail lights are starting to show up on factory cars nowadays.

The one-piece windshield/side window unit was installed with white glue after the headliner was airbrushed light grey. The rear quarter windows and tail gate window are separate pieces and were very ticklish to assemble. There were no locating tabs or gluing surfaces to speak of—they just sort of rested on the body. The fit wasn't great but I was happy just to have them on the car. We're having fun here, remember?

With the body done, it was time to turn to the chassis. The one-piece front and rear suspensions were glued on along with the rear muffler/tail pipe unit. The assembly was lightly sprayed yellow. The suspensions and running gear were then airbrushed flat black. Silver *Rub n' Buff* was, well, rubbed and buffed on the exhaust system, giving it a realistic metallic shine.

Fujimi had metal axles running through one-piece disc brakes on this kit. The axle height would have made the car ride too high, especially with the larger wheels I was planning on using. The metal axles and disc brake pieces were left off; I would later glue the discs to some 20" *Tamiya* wheels and then I would glue the wheels directly to the lower edges of the suspensions, which were generously blocky. Again, lowering is essential in making a Euro—the lowest part of the body (typically the lower edge of the front air dam) should be level with the bottom of the wheel rims. All in all, the chassis was a crude piece and not painted very well by yours truly, but what, is someone going to grab my model and flip it over?

Work on the interior was started. The upper door panel edges were not represented, so I made some out of *Evergreen* plastic stock. I also made backings for the front seats out of

plastic card. *Testors* yellow was airbrushed onto the seat cushions and side panel inserts. These areas were masked off and the interior was sprayed flat black. The dash was also given this same yellow/black treatment. No left hand steering dash is included with the kit, but since I was making a Japanese car with Japanese plates, right hand steering would do just fine. I mention this because many car modelers get seriously annoyed with right hand dash only kits. Obviously they're not British.

The blocky interior was glued to the blocky chassis, ready

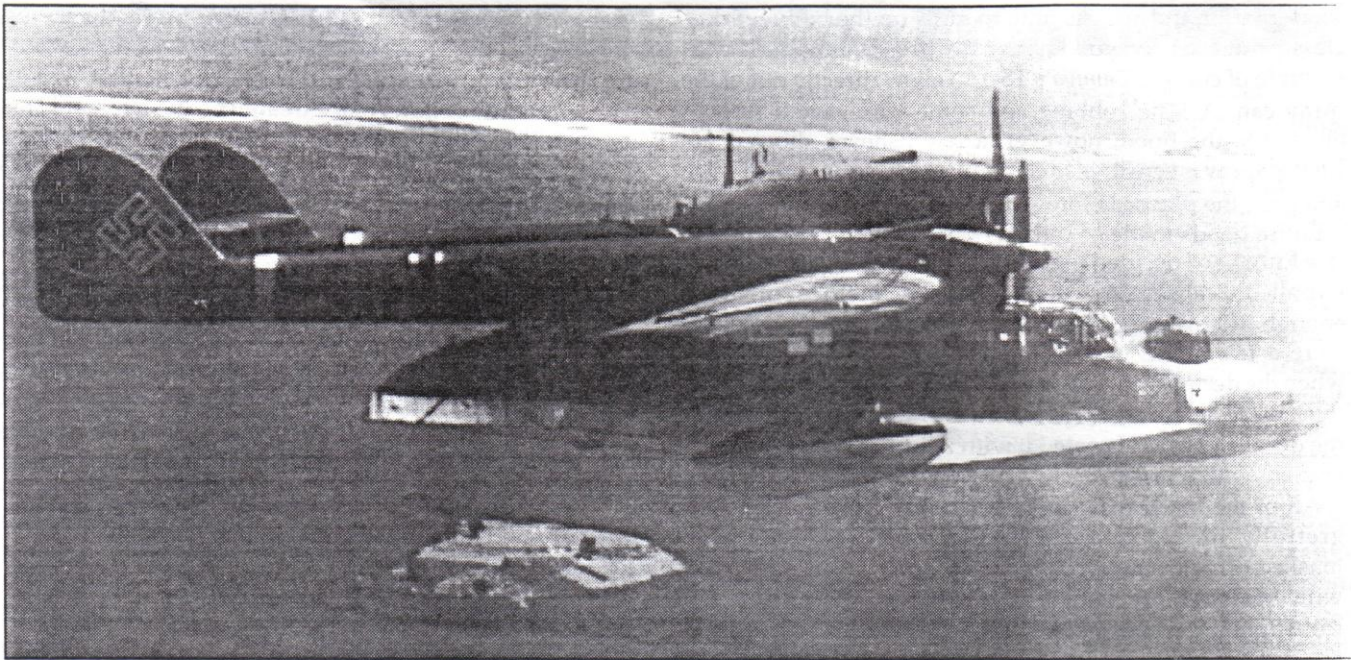


The rear end of Greg's Cefiro, showing the custom tail pipes and very low stance.

for insertion into the body. The wheels were still off at this time—they would be lined up with the wheel well openings after the body was on. After the insides of the windows and the interior were thoroughly cleaned (always remember to do this in car modeling), the body was snapped onto the interior/chassis unit. I will give *Fujimi* credit—the kit is nearly a snap together with its simple engineering, with the exception of those rear windows. 20" wheels from a *Tamiya* rally car kit were painted Metalizer gunmetal and then coated with Future. The tires were slipped on and then the inner bottoms of the wheels were superglued directly onto the suspension ends. The resulting low stance was a great improvement over the kit's high riding 17" wheel set.

Final touches include gluing on the body colored rear view side mirrors and adding Japanese plates from spare *Tamiya* decals. The kit's rear spoiler lacks finesse, but I painted it black and stuck it on anyway. The kit has a choice of two grills—Japanese or European. I liked the looks of the Japanese version, plus it fit better, so it was sprayed in Metalizer gunmetal and highlighted with silver *Rub n' Buff*. Lastly, two large slash cut exhaust tips were made from 5/32" aluminum tubes and glued onto the kit muffler.

There, a completed Nissan Cefiro "Euro" wagon. It's not the best model I've built by a long shot, but I had fun with it and it looks the part. In actuality, this model was just a warm up to a much finer *Aoshima* Accord wagon kit I'm planning to build. This one will be worthy of a bit more effort; stay tuned...



Not all Bv 138s patrolled the icy Arctic. This example from 3.(Fern)Seeaufklärungsguppe 125 patrols the Black Sea.

Fiddling with Supermodel's 'Flying Clog'

Continued from page 1

diately saw that I was going to go through a lot of superglue. Both booms had a pair of sink marks on the upper front surface of the engine nacelles, and the lengthwise seams also needed work. The radiator intakes were a separate "U"-shaped piece of very thin cross-section; both had broken in transit. Fortunately, I was able to piece them and a propeller back together again, but the intakes didn't fit into the nacelles particularly well. I didn't address those seams right away, though, because I wanted to take a close look at photos and drawings first.

Next I put the wings together, top and bottom each side. Again, the seams weren't wonderful, but not as bad as the booms. However, once these dried, dry-fitting the booms to the wings revealed gross alignment problems; the boom assemblies sat so high that the bottom of the nacelles did not match with the wing portion to the tune of about eight scale inches. Out came the bastard file; I rasped away quite a bit of plastic on both sides before getting a decent dry fit.

Four large subassemblies and the beaching trolley to the good now, I was thinking how much better this kit was than the Do 26. Then I took a good look at the components supplied for the interior of the boat. What a horror.

Now, I am not that fond of doing interior detail. If the kit components are even halfway decent, I'm happy. A close look at this kit made me very unhappy. It wasn't just that the cockpit was rudimentary. The kit also comes with two turrets and an open dorsal gun position, and none of the internal bulkheads were included. In fact, from the dorsal position of this kit, it is possible to look forward to the front of the center engine and down to the bottom of the hull. Likewise, each of the turrets are open enough to allow various and sundry views of the extreme nose compartment, the extreme stern, the back side of the instrument panel, and forward into the

lower aft hull. The final capper is that there is no separation between the flight deck and the navigation/radio compartment; it is inaccurately represented as one gigantic cabin, and what is shown aft of the flight deck in no way resembles the real thing. It was evident that at a minimum I was going to have to fashion several bulkheads to close off interior areas that should not be visible and cut apart some of the parts supplied with the kit. I also discovered on dry-fit that the cockpit glass didn't.

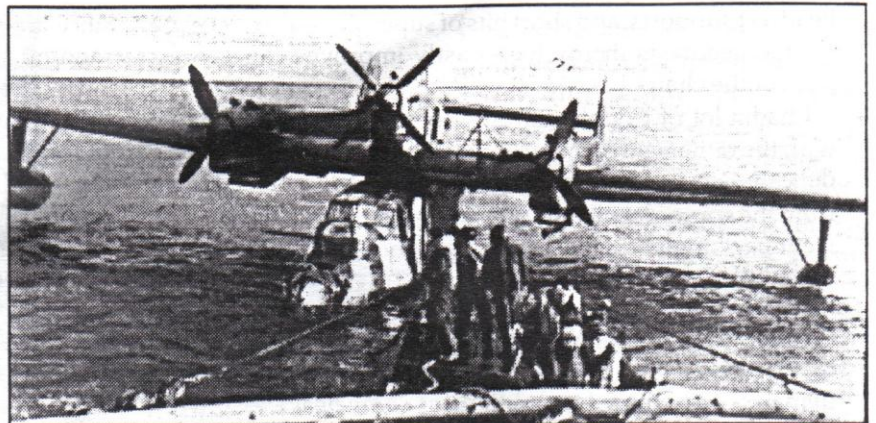
The very first thing I did after these discoveries was to ask myself if I really wanted a 11" by 16" model of a profoundly ugly German flying boat taking up space in my study. Inexplicably, I still did. So, the next step was to purchase a contour gauge so I could fabricate interior bulkheads with some speed and accuracy. Next, I went on the net searching for aftermarket sets. There isn't much for the Bv 138. Fortunately, one of the *Falcon* vacuform canopy sets includes the glazing for this beast, but apart from that, all I could find was *Aries* MG 151s for the turrets and an *Aeroclub* MG 131 for the dorsal position. The guns were a convenience; the glazing absolutely essential. I ordered the stuff, then went back to the bench.

Before beginning my toils over the interior, the kit instructed me to add a couple of two-inch "L"-section pieces to fill in the contours of each hull side. I have no idea why the kit was designed this way, but it was impossible to align the pieces to match either the hull surface or the fuselage sides. I figured I'd just superglue and putty them into submission. Unfortunately, the seams would spring just as I had achieved a level of finish I'd desired, requiring more superglue, more putty and more sanding. I lost count how often this happened, but I did eventually get it all cleaned up.

I took interior contours of the hull with the contour gauge, and traced the pattern onto .020 plastic card. Cut out, the

bulkheads started slightly too big, so it took a little rasping, shaving, sanding and dry-fitting to get them right. I ended up fabricating bulkheads for the following positions: between the nose turret and the flight deck; between the flight deck and the radio/navigation compartment; between the crew rest area and the aft turret (two pieces); aft of the rear gunner; both the front and back of the dorsal gunner's position; and, deep within the central nacelle, but still visible, the aft part of the engine firewall. Three of the bulkheads had watertight doors in them, but the only one I had to cut out was in the bulkhead aft of the flight deck. On the others, the door was hinged on the visible side. The flight deck-to-navigator's-station door was the toughest, requiring a precise cutout followed by detailing with Plastruct rod of two different small cross-sections. For the others, I generated adequate detail with various types and diameters of rod over oval-shaped doors.

The most bulkhead detailing required was for the back of the central nacelle firewall, which was visible through the opening behind the dorsal gunner. A ladder, various pipes, a hydraulic header tank, frames, stringers, and other fixtures were visible in this passage. The hydraulic lines were made from .005 rod, the header tank was fashioned from a leftover 1:48 resin exhaust stub from the *Classic Airframes* Westland *Whirlwind*, the frames were fabricated from "T" cross-section Plastruct rod, the stringers were from .20 x .40 rod, and the insides of the crew access doors were modified photo-etch dive brakes from an *Airwaves* set for the *Meteor* NF 14. The ladder inside the nacelle descending into the flight engineer's station was cut down from an *Airfix Catalina*, and two other fixtures were created out of an aft funnel half of the *Airfix* 1:600 *Cossack*. A number of other anonymous resin and photo-



A Bv 138C-1 of Seeaufklarungsgruppe 130 endeavours with a U-boat in the Arctic Ocean. Note the white distemper camouflage.

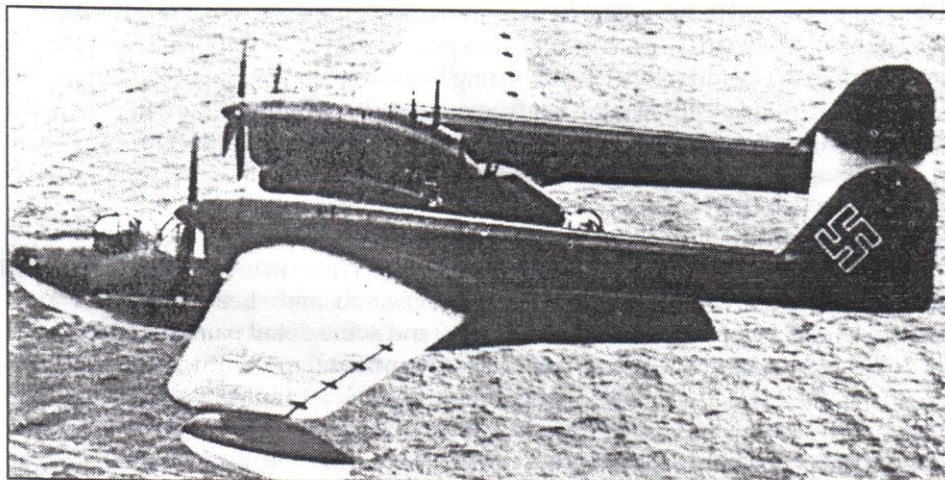
originally intended for the back cockpit of the *Meteor* NF 14, as well as generic photoetched rudder pedals, and bits sawn off a 1:48 P-51D radio. It was also necessary to saw off about 1 1/4 inches from the aft end of the flight deck floor so the bulkhead would fit. Part of this sawed-off piece was used to provide a floor under the forward turret, thus hiding the inside of the hull chine. More "T" rod was used forward to simulate hull stringers, just in case some of this area was visible through the forward turret. I also fabricated a first-aid locker on the right wall of the cockpit, postulating that there would be one there because of the external red cross marking just behind the cockpit glazing on that side.

After working about eighty different parts into the detailing effort, I started to have a glimmer of hope. Some Dremel work was necessary to get the two fuselage halves to dry-fit together properly, involving sanding edges of bulkheads and the aft end of the flight deck floor. This was only an intermediate fit, though, as I still had interior work to do under and near the bow and stern turrets. I built the crawl-way floor to the extreme nose out of one of the plethora of plastic card scraps that by now littered the bench, and attached it. I did much the same for the area under and aft of the rear turret. By now, I was at the point where I would need the transparency set to get any further in the turret areas. Thus I turned my attention to the flight deck.

First I attached the rudder pedals—at least the kit provided supports for these. The main instrument panel was featureless, a decal being provided to add detail, but the mounting point for the panel is too far aft, leaving a gap along the cockpit front edge. Consequently, I clipped the mounting pin, filled the receiving hole, and mounted the panel as

far forward as it would go.

The pilot and observer's chairs were actually usable, as they approximated the right shape (after the mold marks were sanded off the seats). However, they had neither the headrests nor the steel tube shock frames on the back and below. Fortunately, I had lots of styrene rod—six lengths of .010, plus the use of a couple of *Frog* Me 410 aileron mass balances for the



The Bv 138C-1, shown here, had a strengthened airframe and introduced a four-bladed propeller on the center engine.

etch bits were stuck on as well.

I used some more plastic card to fabricate the floor of the dorsal gunner's position and the step into the central nacelle behind it. Some areas here and there also had to be built up with superglue and microballoons, especially where the bulkheads I fabricated had slight gaps.

I detailed the cockpit by adding photoetched side panels

headrest supports, and short bits of superglue-filled .060 tube for the headrests themselves, vastly improved the appearance of the chairs.

I had a lot of trouble with the control wheels. Compared with the rather clunky control columns, the wheels were very delicate—so much so that both broke when I removed them from the sprue, despite the use of a sprue cutter. Luckily, they went back together well after I got rid of the attached sprue and fiddled with the shards under magnification for about ten minutes.

I alternated attention to interior details with effort devoted to the wings and booms. Mating each wing to its boom demanded anything but subtlety, as some heavy rasp work was required on the upper mating surface of each wing to get the matching boom assembly to snug down and align properly. And of course, the rift thus created in each case was heroic in its proportions. The sanding put paid to all the raised detail within a kilometer or so of the seam, as well as the exhaust ports for the engine; exhausts fabricated out of styrene tube looked better anyway. I used tube to replace the fuel dump vents underwing for the same reason.

The wing-fuselage joins presented two problems. First, the mounting pins on one side were slightly misaligned, resulting in that wing being about 1mm higher than the corresponding wing root. This was resolved by filing down the already small-diameter mounting pins even further. This exacerbated the second problem: just two small pins on each side were all that distinguished the junction from a butt joint. I felt the strength would be inadequate for so large an aircraft. Consequently, I decided to add some spar support. In order to discourage droop, I drilled a 9/64" hole at a 30-degree upwards angle from the inside of each fuselage half, through the root plate of each wing assembly (between the original mounting pins), and inserted lengths of .15 styrene tube long enough to wedge against the inside of the top wing. The end of each tube was cut at a 60-degree angle for maximum surface contact. To aid alignment, I first painted a blue stripe on the top side of each tube; otherwise, I would have had trouble being sure the angle cut was hitting the inside of the wing correctly.

The propeller assemblies require precise attention if you desire to have units which will rotate. As I didn't care, I paid primary attention to getting the painting right and the five-piece assemblies in alignment. They would not go onto the model until after painting and decals.

The starboard wing went on first; the root seam wasn't too bad, as at least the wing and the root matched well. I then varied from usual practice by attaching the various small bits to the wing. Originally, I thought to paint each half of the model separately, minimizing the amount of masking around the interior gaps, and easing interior repair if something went wrong. Later in the build, I discovered this was unnecessary,

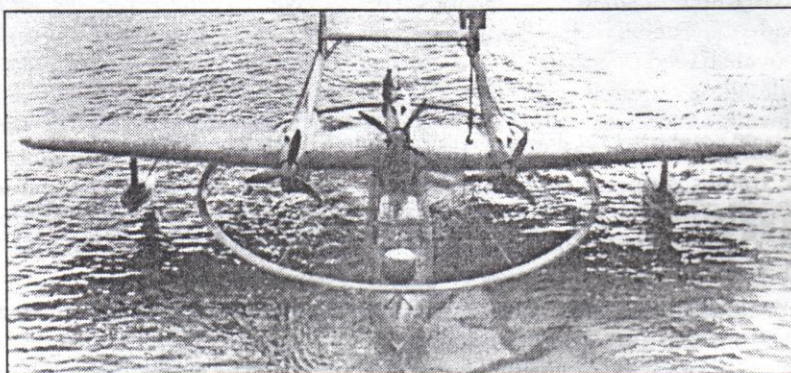
since the turrets did not need to be mounted until after sanding and painting.

The port wing was a little worse, as I had to whittle down the mounting pins to minimize misalignment, but I was able to confine the misfit to the underside of the root. I did not do the small bits on this yet, as I had by now changed my approach.

The aftermarket parts had arrived. The transparencies were far superior to the kit items they replaced, though I still had to use the porthole windows and two sliding panels in the cockpit area. The *Aeroclub* MG 131s (two came in the package) were lovely white metal castings. On the other hand, the *Aires* MG 151 (four) consisted of nice resin breech assemblies, and separate barrels that weren't so nice: one was straight, two were severely warped, and the fourth moderately warped. I eventually got the second straightened out with hot water and lots of rolling on the table top. Of course, none of these

various bits were designed to work with each other.

The first step for the guns was to take the MG 131 gun mount from the kit and cut the gun away, leaving just the mount. This was a tense bit of surgery, as the arms of the mount weren't very hefty, but I managed by dint of magnifier, X-acto and Dremel to trim it down.



A few Bv 138s became Bv 138 MS minesweeping aircraft, with a large degaussing loop for exploding mines in rivers and coastal waters.

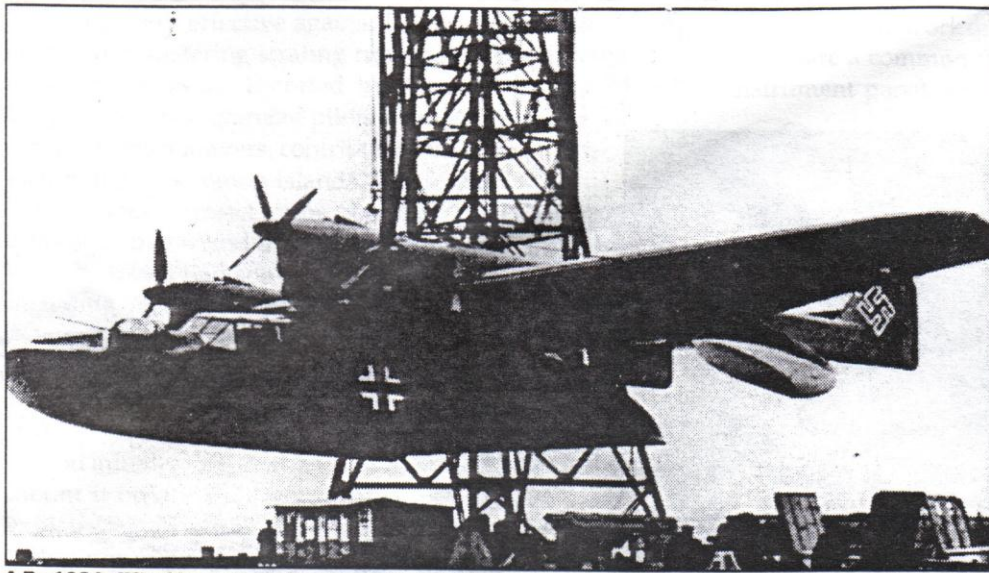
I gently hand-drilled a hole in the center of the mount in which to lodge the *Aeroclub* MG 131 using small drill bits, starting with a #80, and eventually working up to a #68.

The *Falcon* turrets, though lovely, provide the complication that there are no provisions for mounting the MG 151 inside; this is interesting because the kit transparencies have a projecting bar from one side to mount the gun. It looks awful, of course, which is why I decided to go with the vacuform turrets, but I was now faced with fabricating something convincing to put inside each turret.

As it happened, years ago I parted out an *Airfix* B-24; I still had the nose and tail turret rings in my spares box. With a little surgery, some styrene rod and sheet, lengths of 1:48 .50-caliber ammo belt, and some detail painting, I came up with internals that would mount the MG 151 and slide up inside each transparency. Both turret transparencies were glued to the respective turret hulls with *Aleene's Jewel-It*. The breech assembly front end snugged up against the turret slot; I drilled this out at the appropriate location and attached the barrel.

I painted all the interior areas with a coat of *Polly Scale* RLM 02, then added detail in other colors, mostly NATO tri-black. I also used a wash based on RLM 74 to bring out detail, especially around bulkhead doors. I added a red cross decal on the first-aid kit in the cockpit, and the decal for the main instrument panel.

It was now time to mate the two halves of the hull, with wings already attached. Because the alignment was equivo-



A Bv 138 is lifted by a crane in preparation for loading aboard a catapult-equipped ship. Such ships were used to extend the range of the long-legged Bv 138 even further.

cal, and required some force to achieve, I used superglue as the bonding agent. Except for the area between the cockpit and the center engine, things went together pretty well. There was only about two inches of seam on the planing bottom, though this kit has a reputation for trouble there. The one hard-to-resolve seam, behind the cockpit, is difficult because the top of the fuselage decking goes underneath the central engine radiator housing, thus giving a "U"-shaped seam with a very narrow access area. The same seam goes through the central engine nacelle and radiator as well. Resolving the seams took a while, even though, except for the area aft of the cockpit, the seam reduction was unremarkable. I had some trouble finding a tool narrow enough to sand down the superglue I used at the deepest part of the aforementioned "U;" I eventually resorted to using a *Zona* saw. That worked reasonably well, as I managed not to saw the central engine off the rest of the model. As for the radiator seam, I had anticipated this problem, and had previously cut a piece of sheet styrene to fit the face of the radiator—you don't have to fill what you can hide.

I now realized that there was an alignment problem. The stabilizer, when dry fitted, was marginally higher on one side. After looking the whole model over for the source of the error, I concluded that the left boom might be 2mm higher than the right. Short of sawing through and remounting a boom, the only solution I saw was to sand down the stabilizer mounting pins so that it could mount a little up on one side and a little down on the other. I did this; it made the misalignment much less obvious.

I was pleased to find that the turrets as assembled now would pop right into the holes, and the Falcon cockpit transparency fit well too. I added most of the remaining small detail pieces to the wings, and the skeg on the underside of the aft hull. It was now time to begin painting.

The beaching trolley received a coat of RLM 70 black green, with RLM 66 black-gray wheel hubs and NATO tri-color black for the tires. This looked better than what I imagined it would look like if painted black per the kit instructions.

The basic scheme I chose for the aircraft itself was a 72/73/65 splinter, a typical German over-ocean scheme, but the

particular aircraft I was doing also had yellow wingtips on the underside and yellow bands on the booms. So, the first order of business was to airbrush the yellow. Next I airbrushed the wing floats with RLM 72. I then masked over the portion of the yellow for the wingtips and bands and RLM 72 for the floats that I wished to retain, and airbrushed the underside coat of RLM 65. The first coat revealed a plethora of small flaws, which I expunged before repainting.

With the underside coat applied, I masked further and airbrushed RLM 73 on the sides and top. Again, some flaws were revealed, and dealt with. Still further masking

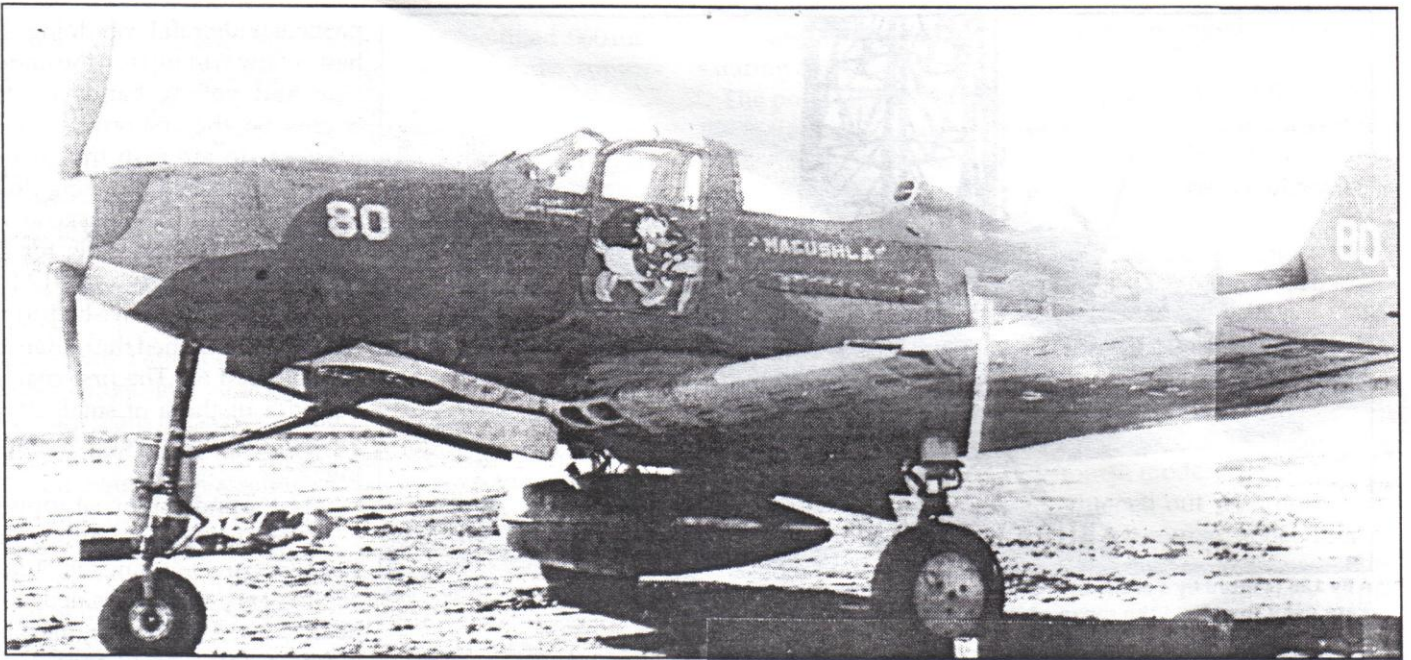
established the splinter pattern I wanted, and I applied the RLM 72. The difference between the two topside colors was so small that I wasn't sure I'd even used the right color until I peeled back the masking. Finally, I was able to remove all of the masking; a few places required touch-up, but the most grueling part of the painting was done.

The control column and seat assemblies went into the cockpit next, followed by three 50 Kg bombs underwing. The kit bombs were so misshapen that I raided the spares box for some better-looking ones. This required that the existing bomb-mounting holes be filled, sanded out and painted over. The new bombs with integral pylons were then attached with CA.

After airbrushing a gloss coat with Future, I was ready to add the decals. The kit decals did not cover the specific aircraft I was modeling, 7R+RL of 3./SAGr 125, and the carrier for the kit decals had discolored, so I needed some supplementary decals. Only the external red cross marker and the two squadron crests came from the kit sheet. Various leftover kit decal sheets and aftermarket 10mm Luftwaffe code sheets provided me with everything else. Once again, this hobby has demonstrated the value of being a packrat!

With the decals on, I shot another coat of Future, followed by a coat of *Floquil* Railroad Flat after two days of curing. Then the last bits went on: seat belts in the cockpit, dorsal MG 131, the two turrets, the cockpit glazing, pitot, D/F loop, antenna mast and the three propeller assemblies. The very last step was to attach the antenna wires between the mast and the two fins. I used two lengths of .003 fishing leader painted beforehand with NATO tri-black. I drilled pilot holes in each fin and inserted an end of the leader with superglue on it into each hole. Once this was secure, I stretched one to the mast, just slightly slack and attached with superglue, cutting the excess, and repeating on the other side. A carefully-aimed hair dryer brought both wires taut, and I was done.

Although I bemoaned the truly horrible interior, getting there on my own has certainly been fun. And I think I've got the large-aircraft bug out of my system for a while. On the other hand, the closet still contains a PBY, a Do 24, a *Stranraer*, a PB2Y and a PBM...



'Macushla,' a member of the 35th Pursuit Group, based at Port Moresby, with what looks like the start of a shark's mouth.

A makeover for Monogram's P-400 Airacobra

By Laramie Wright

Question: "What is a P-400?" Answer: "A P-40 with a Zero on its tail!" That was the grim joke making the rounds in Australia and the Solomon Islands in 1942 and 43. In a nutshell, that described the problems faced by U.S. Army Air Force pilots fighting against the Japanese in the desperate early days of the war in the Pacific. While excellent fighters were on the way such as the P-38 *Lightning*, P-47 *Thunderbolt* and the P-51 *Mustang*, Army pilots had to go against Zeros and Oscars with obsolescent planes until they arrived. Among them was the P-400 *Airacobra*, an orphan that no one wanted.

Originally developed as an export version of the USAAF's P-39 series and intended for service with the British, who rejected it as unfit for service following trials in England. Due to the cancelled order, the P-400 was available in some numbers when the Air Corps cast about desperately for anything that could be thrown against the crushing might of the ram-paging Japanese Naval and Army air forces in the Pacific.

The P-39/P-400 was in many ways a very advanced airplane, with tricycle landing gear and a centrally-mounted engine that was connected to the propeller through a long shaft that passed under the pilot to a transfer case in the nose. That highly unusual arrangement allowed for the installation of concentrated armament consisting of four nose-mounted .30-cal-

iber machine guns and a cannon that fired through the prop hub. With the P-400 the armament changed to two .50-caliber machine guns and a 20mm cannon. There were two additional .30-caliber guns in each wing, outboard of the propeller disk.

As the *Airacobra* was designed, it was equipped with a turbo-supercharger that boosted engine performance and propelled the plane at nearly 400mph. The Army decided to delete the super-charge on production versions while increasing all-up weight, the consequence of which was to limit the effective altitude for the *Airacobra* to less than 10,000 feet, and it was sluggish even then. To compound the problem, the P-400's were fitted with British oxygen equipment. There was no compatibility with U.S. equipment and so, the Army pilots were unable to operate at high altitude even had the *Airacobra* possessed the performance to do so.

It became rapidly apparent that the highly maneuverable, faster Japanese fighters were greatly superior to the U.S. contenders. Nevertheless, Americans went out day after day in their inferior machines to contest the spread of the Japanese

Empire. By dint of rugged aircraft construction and the courage and tenacity of the men flying them, a certain amount of success was achieved and some aces created.

The P-400 came into its own as a ground attack aircraft. On Guadalcanal



The airplane Laramie modeled, at Henderson Field, Guadalcanal in 1942.

they were very effective against Japanese forces, delivering bombs and blistering strafing runs that fully exploited their massive firepower. Escorted by Army P-38s and Marine Corps F4Fs, the *Airacobra* pilots delivered excellent service as mud movers, contributing their part to the victory in the Solomon Islands.

This model project came about as a result of a request from a friend in exchange for several model kits. My friend had some old out of production kits, including the then scarce *Monogram* Do 335 that he gave me in trade for building him a P-400 from the Guadalcanal campaign. I agreed and after some delay commenced work on the model in January of this year.

I had initially intended to build it out of the box and mount it on a base. Then, for reasons I cannot yet explain I began working on improving the kit. Finally losing my mind completely, I re-scribed the entire model.

The 30-year-old *Monogram* kit has been recently overtaken by *Eduard's* P-39/P-400 series, with its recessed panel lines, photoetched parts and the rest. Still, the *Monogram* kit is a good solid kit, well-detailed and accurate in shape and outline. It has some opened panels for display of the engine compartment and armament bay and a good cockpit. The biggest shortcoming by today's standards is the raised panel outlines.

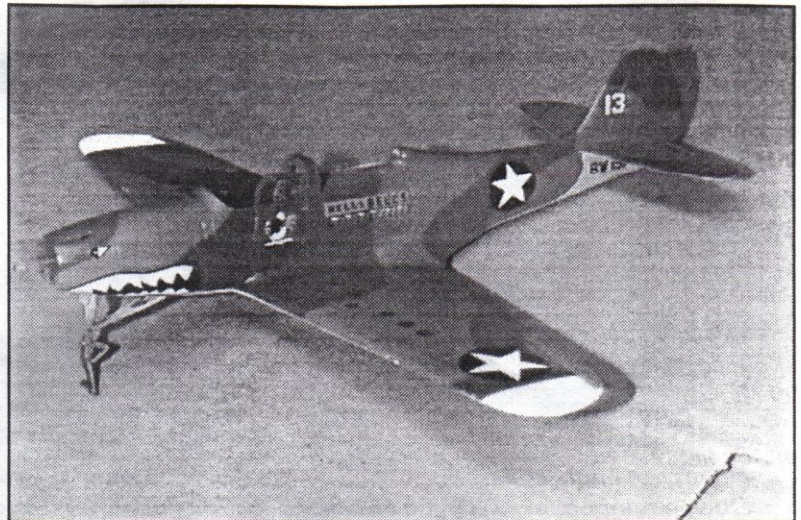
My friend had begun the kit many moons ago, and several parts had been brush painted with a very tough enamel paint which resisted paint thinner, turpenoid, and even lacquer



The fighting cock logo worn by the 67th Fighter Squadron, 347th Fighter Group in 1942. The logo was designed by Walt Disney Studios.

thinner as I tried to clean them. We used to have really good paint, I guess. After cleaning up and/or light sanding, I commenced working on the armament bay. The kit provides a good basis for detail with the floor, bulkheads, ammo cans and armament separate. The .50-caliber machine guns are fairly well detailed and once assembled and painted look good in their mounts. The 20mm cannon is not very visible but had reasonable detail present that detail painting brought out. All in all, you can make a nice representation without a great effort.

Next, I began work on the cockpit area. The cockpit and gun bay share a common floor that had good detail. A firewall, instrument panel, seat and rear frame make up the pilot's



Laramie's model, with its RAF-style camouflage and shark's mouth. Note the fighting cock logo on the pilot's door.

office. There is some detail molded on the sidewalls and the instrument panel is crisply detailed. A bit of extra effort with some levers and whatnot spruced up the cockpit nicely. I found that the rear frame sat too vertically and did not line up with the cockpit door opening. The photo on the kit box showed the same arrangement so, maybe a small engineering problem exists. I adjusted the fit if the parts until they fit properly and cemented them in place.

I painted the instrument panel flat black with dark green braces. The instrument faces were detailed using a Prismacolor white pencil, then used superglue to simulate the glass covering them. Further detail painting included highlighting the .50-caliber charging handles in red and a few red and yellow dots here and there to add interest. Lower console instruments were painted and detailed in the same manner as the main panel instruments.

Sidewall details were painted and highlighted, then the canvas boot at the base of the control stick was painted olive drab. A wash of dark oils was followed by light scuff and wear marks added using a silver pencil. Cockpit glazing was removed from the sprue, cleaned up and polished to be added after painting was finished.

The engine bay was painted to represent the Allison V-12 in its nest and then masked off, as was the wheel bay, cockpit and gun bay. The next stop was painting. I began by painting the top and bottoms of the wingtips with *Tamiya* Flat White. The tips were then masked off and next I painted the undersides with a mix of *Tamiya* Light Blue and Flat White that was on the light side.

Bell, like Curtiss and Brewster only approximated British colors (colours?) so there was variance. Once the undersides had dried overnight I masked the undersides and applied *Gunze Sangyo* RAF Light Earth overall, thinned with their proprietary thinner. That seemed to promote a harder finish that stood up better to handling than previous *Gunze* experiences (thank you Ben Pada).

Next, I masked off the areas to remain light earth using Fun Tack that I rolled into thin worms and applied to mark the



An 80th Fighter Squadron P-40. Not only did P-40s wear British colors, they had British serials (this one is BW 134).

camouflage boundaries. The stuff sticks well and conforms nicely to compound curves and other areas that are masking pains with conventional tape. I filled the spaces between the lines with strips and scraps of masking tape. After checking to make sure all was correct, I shot the second color, *Gunze* RAF Dark Green. After a bit I removed all masks and inspected for flaws. A bit of touch-up here and there followed, resulting in a satisfactory finish. Clear parts were masked and painted at the same time as the upper surfaces. I used masking tape cut with a new #11 blade. I shot the interior color first, then over coated with light earth or dark green as required. I removed the masking tape and cleaned up adhesive deposited in a few spots and did a little touch up with a fine brush, then set them aside until final assembly.

I used *Tamiya* Clear Gloss on the undersides of the wings to prepare the surfaces for decal application, a step not necessary on the semi-gloss *Gunze Sangyo* painted upper surfaces. I applied the ancient kit decals, and I admit that I had to use part of a second sheet from another *Monogram* kit when some on the first sheet failed to release. Though thick, they went on

pretty well and by judicious use of clean damp cloth they conformed to curves and panel lines acceptably.

Panel lines were accented using a No.2 pencil and exhaust and gun powder stains applied.

About then I realized I had forgotten the wing walkways! It was the Thursday before the meeting so there was no time to get a decal sheet and I did not relish masking the walks and spraying. I used masking tape, cut to shape and sprayed flat black. I sealed them with a coat of gloss acrylic. Finally I shot the aircraft with several light coats of *Floquil* clear. The last operation was installation of the clear parts using white glue.

I took the finished P-40 to the June meeting and while it garnered no prize in the mini-contest, it did receive a number of nice comments from members and I enjoyed explaining that it was NOT the *Eduard* kit. I later mounted the model on an *Eduard* pierced steel planking (PSP) base and handed it over to my friend who was very happy to receive it.

All in all it was a good modeling experience and a nice break from tanks.

EDITOR'S BRIEF

The editor sends his apologies for missing the last meeting. He was forced to attend a wedding—a Friday night wedding!—In Berkeley. Oh, the humanity!

Also, the editor wishes to apologize to Postoria Aguirre for consistently misspelling his first name.

Finally, the editor wishes to apologize for not being able to interject himself into last month's set-to about meeting locations. People have said some nasty things to Brad Chun, about a situation that Brad has very little control over. Here's the deal: we are the club of choice for people ranging from San Francisco to Monterey to El Cerrito, partially because we've been meeting in Milpitas—a centrally-located site—for so long. The recent hiccups have shown that we lose members when we move. The decision to go back to Milpitas is a good one, and hopefully it will boost our attendance and our membership. That's the reason we should try to remain there.

One person, during the course of this debate, told Brad that if he wanted to meet in Milpitas he should start his own club. This is a classic misplacement of burden, as the lawyers might

say. Brad has a club; in fact, he's the president. However, the doofus who so maliciously questioned Brad's motives has the option of starting his own club. The editor is sure that he'd enjoy exploring the exciting topics of meeting locations, newsletters and club treasuries as much as they do now on the SVSM E-board.

As for the Christmas gift exchange: it's time to scale back. It has been getting a bit out of hand as the event has grown in size and as participants come out of the woodwork. Those who attend the Fremont Hornets' December meeting have seen how nice and peaceful a Christmas meeting can be. When there are 100-plus people and the club officers are turned into wait-staff, that whole goodwill toward man thing starts to go out the window.

These changes are not bad things—they are needed to keep the club on an even keel. Good for Brad for taking the Tu-4 by the horns!

And now...Back to modeling!

—The Editor

Brace yourself for the *Mach 2* PBM *Mariner*

By Mark Schynert

From the mid-'30s through to the end of WWII, the United States manufactured about 4900 large flying boats. Two-thirds were Consolidated *Catalinas*, a classic design that has seen a lot of action in scale kits, especially in 1:48 and 1:72, and justly so. By contrast, the Martin PBM *Mariner*, which comprised almost all the rest of U.S. big 'boat production, has had next to nothing: a box scale *Revell* kit from the fifties, a 1:700 example (as part of a kit of U.S. aircraft) from Japan to accessorize 1:700 ships or dioramas, a tiny seven-piece example as part of the *Revell Pine Island* seaplane tender kit, and 1:72 vacuforms from

Execuform and *Rareplanes*. Given the type's long and distinguished service in WWII and Korea, this is unfortunate. But maybe flyingboat fans have a kit now that's been worth the wait. Surprisingly, the manufacturer is *Mach 2*.

This is strictly an evaluation of what can be seen by examining the parts, decals, etc. My comments, to the extent they compliment or disparage the kit, should be taken in the context of a limited-run injection kit. I am not comparing this kit to anything *Tamiya* has done in the last twenty years. So if I think something is bad, that is in terms of what one would expect from a limited-run kit. Likewise, adulation must be kept in context. Expect a lot of flash.

I built the *Mach 2* Dornier Do 26 about three years ago, so I must admit to some trepidation when I decided to get the *Mariner* kit. The Do 26 was a fairly accurate kit in outline, but it took between 150 and 200 hours to build, and had some abysmal qualities, including scabrous areas on the surfaces, hideously bad injected transparencies, poor fit, questionable engineering, many defective small parts, and misinformative instructions. The good news is that this kit may be better—or at least, so I'm led to believe from what I see in the box.

The kit as issued by *Mach 2* consists of three large and two smaller sprues of gray plastic, comprising over a hundred parts; a sprue of about twenty nominally clear plastic pieces, including the cockpit canopy and three gun turrets; a decal sheet for two USN aircraft, plus a serial number for an RAF Coastal Command *Mariner*; and an instruction sheet. The kit offers alternative engine nacelles and radomes for the PBM-3 and the PBM-5, and beaching gear.

Large parts: The hull has some nice engraved detail, and is mostly free of the scabby surface marring I encountered with the Do 26; there are a few spots, easily cleaned up. The wings are also provided with engraved detail, but the few scabby areas (underside of the wings only) are more problematic as they obliterate detail. Fortunately, it is not symmetrical, so

one can figure out what to replace based on the mate. However, the starboard underside wing also has some wavy distortions in the surface right around one of the scabs; this is minor enough that I think it will sand out, but it may militate against any kind of a gloss finish. The top of the stabilizer is one piece, establishing the dihedral rather nicely. The fins/rudders look okay.

Small parts: The small parts are for the most part executed far better than with the Do 26. The propellers in particular are a vast improvement, though they will still require clean-up, and some may prefer aftermarket replacement. The machine



The first production PBM-1 in flight, 1940. This portly plane could lug a payload of four tons.

guns are the worst, being nothing more than badly-done bits of .010 rod, but this is no big deal to replace. An antenna also looks unusable. The interior is a bit above rudimentary, with instrument panel, control wheels, bulkheads and four seats; it should offer the basis for a more detailed cockpit. Ditto the turret innards.

"Clear" parts: These are pretty poor. I think the canopy is usable, though I'm concerned the frames are too thick. The nose turret glazing also looks to be usable, but the dorsal and tail turrets are merely translucent, and otherwise unconvincing. I will have to look through the *Falcon Clear-Vax* sets to see if there are reasonable substitute turrets, because I don't think these can be salvaged. The various small clear pieces are probably not worth using; it would be easier to use clear epoxy resin, clear decal film, or Kristal Kleer.

Decals: They don't look bad. The insignia blue looks right, and likewise the red; propeller decals are provided. I don't see any registration problems. They look to be on the thick side. If you are interested in the RAF version, *Mach 2* wants you to find your own roundels and fin flashes, though they do give specs for these in the instructions.

Instructions: The assembly portion is mostly simple diagrams, and except for the cryptic admonition to "reduce" a part (how exactly is not specified), it looks straightforward. The parts in the diagrams do appear to match parts on the sprues! The markings portion gives details for the three aircraft noted before, and also appears straightforward.

Overall, this looks to be much better than a vacuform. Apart from the waviness in one wing panel noted above, all the parts appear to without warping, torquing or short shots. Both fuselage halves measure to the same length and maximum hull depth (something I've learned not to assume!), and the wing pieces appear to be mirror images of their opposite-side counterparts, apart from the defects noted above. In short, it appears to be a buildable PBM in 1:72, the only one on the market right now.

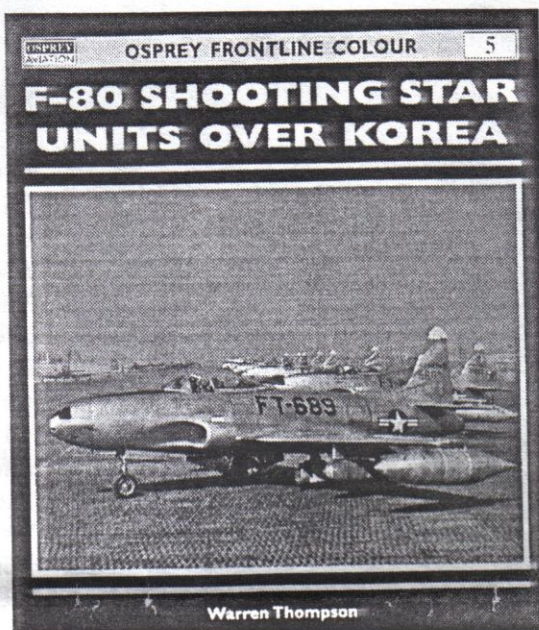
SVSM BOOKSHELF

F-80 Shooting Star Units Over Korea

By Warren Thompson

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Warren Thompson has written many books on the Korean air war, but for modelers this series (Osprey Frontline Colour) is his crowning achievement. Chock full of color photos, the book has more text—more *insightful* text—than you might expect. You'll read how F-80 pilots found the Il-10 as tough to destroy as Luftwaffe pilots had found it to be seven years earlier. You'll hear the tale of the RF-80s that flew a pair of MiG-15s into the ground! You'll marvel at stories of these "old" jets flying seven or eight sorties per day.



The book really is about the photos, however. Any one who's ever owned the *Airfix* P-80 will recognize some of the subjects: "Spirit of Hobo," "Eagle Eye Fleagle" and "6 Guns for Hire" among the familiar F-80s. There are also plenty of other intriguing schemes; one plane is called "Joanie's Modeleer," although little extra information is included on this one.

If you're leery about doing naturam metal finishes, you should scan this book. There are no gleaming, polished planes here; every one is beaten up, scratched and worn. For the more experienced metal finishers, this book provides a catalog of surfaces and textures to replicate. I think I even figured out how to do patches from which paint has been removed, just by scanning this volume.

The book includes a chapter on tactical reconnaissance units, a nice touch considering how often these units are overlooked.

If you have any interest in Korean War subjects, seek these books out. The series includes volumes dedicated to the F-51 Mustang, F-84 Thunderjet and B-26 Invader, and a volume on F-86 fighter bombers. Coming are volumes on the Sabres of the 4th Fighter Interceptor Group and the 51st Fighter Interceptor Group. Let's hope this trend continues to include fighters and attack aircraft wearing blue paint!

—Chris Bucholtz

Verlinden War Machines

Volume 17

VLS Productions

The latest publication in the *Verlinden* War Machines series is No. 17 covering the Jagdpanzer IV L/70. Comprising a mere 24 pages, the small size of this photo file belies the amount of information that is within.

The subject vehicle is covered in a unique style, the 78 color photographs show an almost completely restored Jagdpanzer IV posed in various candid vignettes with appropriately attired crewmen and supporting infantry. I found the effect to be very convincing, providing information on crew uniforms, possible diorama subjects as well as a feel for what it must have been like to see these tank killers in action.

Some of the interior photos show the crew manning their vehicle in a buttoned up combat condition and you can get a feel for the cramped and stuffy conditions that they had to work in.

The best part, however, are the detail shots of what is a rather poorly documented subject. There are many photos of the unique superstructure as well as several photos of the Panzer IV chassis and suspension that I have never been able to find before.

Priced at only \$12.95 I can only hope that Verlinden will be able to continue this format.

—Laramie Wright

LETTERS TO SVSM

Dear Editor,

Alright fellow modelers, this club is about scale replica building, not where we meet. When we got the boot from Milpitas and we were looking for a place to meet I remembered that the Los Altos library had a nice program room. I simply went down there and booked it, and we've had a few meetings there now, as you know.

There's always a catch, however. If anything, Los Altos is more restrictive than Milpitas on the room booking rules. It's first come, first served with a three month advance maximum for use of the room. Our meeting night in August, for instance, was taken even as I was signing up for June and July. We are by no means guaranteed the third Friday of every month—I've asked.

Milpitas has been our traditional meeting place, and I for one say we go there, especially if we can get the third Friday on a consistent basis. We need a regular site to keep the attendance up, just as we need a set day. Again, the catch—10 p.m. is a bit early to stop our meetings.

This club is a democracy (are your dues paid?), and I suppose we'll hear some more talk on the issue. Fresh ideas and alternatives are gladly welcomed, but to those who would turn this into a Milpitas vs. Los Altos debate please get the facts and don't talk too long about it...

—Greg Plummer

JULY MINUTES

At the July meeting, it was announced that the August meeting would be at the Milpitas Public Library, starting at 7 p.m. sharp. There will be no selling in the building; if you must conduct transactions, exchange your money and goods in the parking lot.

In model talk... Ken Miller built the *Minicraft* C-97 in AeroPacífico colors. He says he used more superglue on this model than on any he's ever done before. Ken added the *Cobra Company* engines and propellers and finished the airplane in *Snj* natural metal paint. Randy Ray says the *Tamiya* Marder III has very impressive surface detail, something he's seen close up since he's got several of the major subassemblies together already. Randy's *Academy* Warrior AFV is farther along, with several exterior details from *Accurate Armor*. Speaking of resin, Randy also has a *PJ Productions* Hawker Hunter FGA.6 assembled and in need of paint, and he's also got a pair of Maxim machine guns from a Russian company awaiting paint. Robin Powell has two *Spitfires* about to take to the air, the rare Mk. III with extra short clipped wingtips and a garish yellow over white/night paint scheme, converted from a *Hasegawa* Mk. V, and a *Hasegawa* Mk. IX built largely out of the box except for a *Cooper Details* seat. Robin is also building an *Eduard* *Tempest* Mk. V, using the *Jaguar* details and fuselage plug to make the *Tempest* the right length. Robin swiped landing gear from a *Hobbycraft* *Sea Fury* to give the plane a proper stance. Postoria Aguirre is getting more adventurous and smaller in scale at the same time; his latest car is a 1:43 resin kit of a Subaru SVX. Laramie Wright, now that he has his P-400 done, has two new kits on his hands. He says the *Hasegawa* *Spitfire* Mk. V goes together exceptionally well. He's working hard with a punch and die to create enough rivets for the *DML* Panzer IVJ. Clarence Novak built a helicopter prototype, a paper kit of a German railway gun with a scratchbuilt base and railings, and an Alpha Romeo with parts he turned on a lathe himself. Greg Plummer turned his *Fujimi* Nissan Cefiro (aka the Infiniti I30 wagon) into a Euro lowrider, with a lemon yellow finish. Greg's *Macchi* 205, built from the *Hasegawa* kit, was as weathered as the Cefiro was clean; Greg finished it as a Egyptian post-war aircraft. Roy Sutherland used *Tamiya* paints to put the finishing touches on his *Tamiya* *Mosquito*, which he converted to an NF 14. This model took a second at the nationals in Chicago. Roy's now working on a 1:48 *Spitfire* 24, using the *Airfix* kit as a basis and adding a *Cooper Details* interior. Mike Braun also brought home a

nationals award with his *Eitzel Speed Classics* 1928 Stutz Bearcat landspeed record car. Mike built this lovely white and silver car in just a week! Mike also won with his hypothetical CAC *Wallaby*, a modified Grumman *Skyrocket* built from the *Minicraft* kit, his *Tamiya* Fw 190 equipped with a *Cooper Details* interior, a *Tamiya* Dewoitine D.520 with a largely scratchbuilt cockpit, and a *Tamiya* Skyray with a *Cutting Edge* cockpit set, which took first in its category. Chris Hughes is getting tubular with a *DML* L640 recoilless gun; Chris is also working on a couple of figures that will no doubt wind up as crew for his armor models. Ben Pada added the *Cooper Details* interior and *Kommandeur* decals to his *Tamiya* Fw 190D-9. Ben is also building a couple of *Hasegawa* 1:48 fighters, the A6M5 Zero and the *Spitfire* Mk. IX. Jim Lund, decrying the lack of twin-engined aircraft, decided to do something about it and brought in a pair of *Williams Bros.* Boeing 247s, one in United Airlines markings and a second in an anodized metal finish. Rodney Rogers used kits from *Hasegawa* in 1:72 to build his Northrop F-20 *Tigershark* and F-104 *Starfighter*. Barry Bauer went to town on an *Italeri* Sherman, adding the HVSS suspension from *Verlinden* and a composite hull from *DML* with a toned-down hull surface finish. Barry is also working on some land transport inspired by his daughters—a pair of horses from *DML*, one finished as a European riding horse and the other as an English fox hunter's steed. Barry's also finding it hard to stay away from the *Corsair*, trying his hand at a 1:72 example from *Tamiya*. Marks Schynert's efforts to finish his *Supermodel* Bv 138 flying boat were hampered by the age of his decals; he found it difficult to find replacement markings to finish his "flying clog." Vince Hutson is taking a break from his 1:32 *Spitfire* to tackle *Hobbycraft's* *Seafire* in 1:48. Ron Wergin fought his way through the *Esci* Saab Viggen and followed it up with three 1:72 fighters: a P-40Q with olive drab/gray camouflage and a shark mouth; an *ICM* Yak-9, and a *Tamiya* Bf 109E-3. Cliff Kranz' two P6M *Seamaster* kits were built 40 years apart, both from the same hoary *Revell* molds. Braulio Escoto's naval arm grew by two, both in 1:72: an F8U *Crusader*, from the *Hasegawa* kit, and an F2H-4 *Banshee*, fashioned from the *Hobbycraft* kit. And the model of the month goes to... Steve Travis and his collection of neat hot rods. Steve detailed out the *AMT* '29 Ford roadster, and he's also occupied his post surgery time working on a '32 hot rod Ford and a '28 Model T.

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

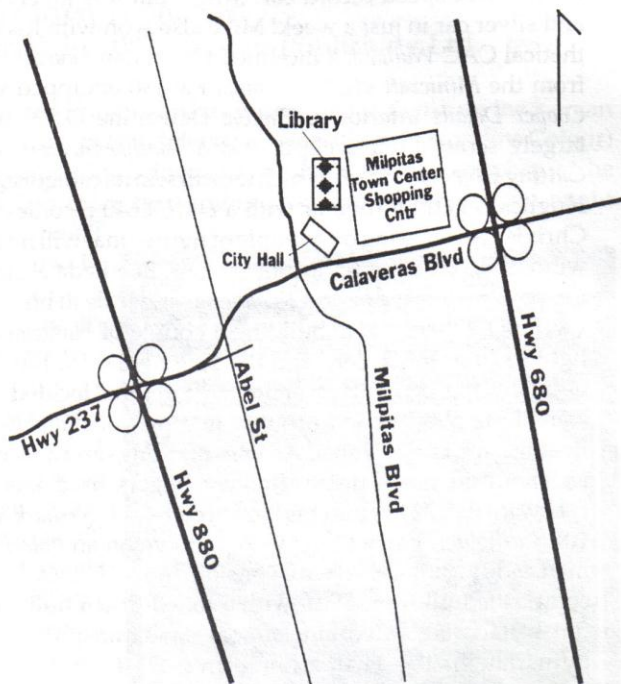
STYRENE SHEET

Write to:

Silicon Valley Scale Modelers, P.O. Box 361644 Milpitas, CA

or, by E-mail, to bucholtzc@aol.com

Note the new time and location!



Next meeting:
**7:00 p.m.,
Friday,
August 17**

**at the Milpitas
Public Library**

40 N. Milpitas Blvd.

**For more information, call the
editor at (408) 723-3995**

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Don't forget: If your renewal date is red, it's time to pay your dues!