



Dassault's delta: the Mirage III-D in 1:72

By Mike Burton

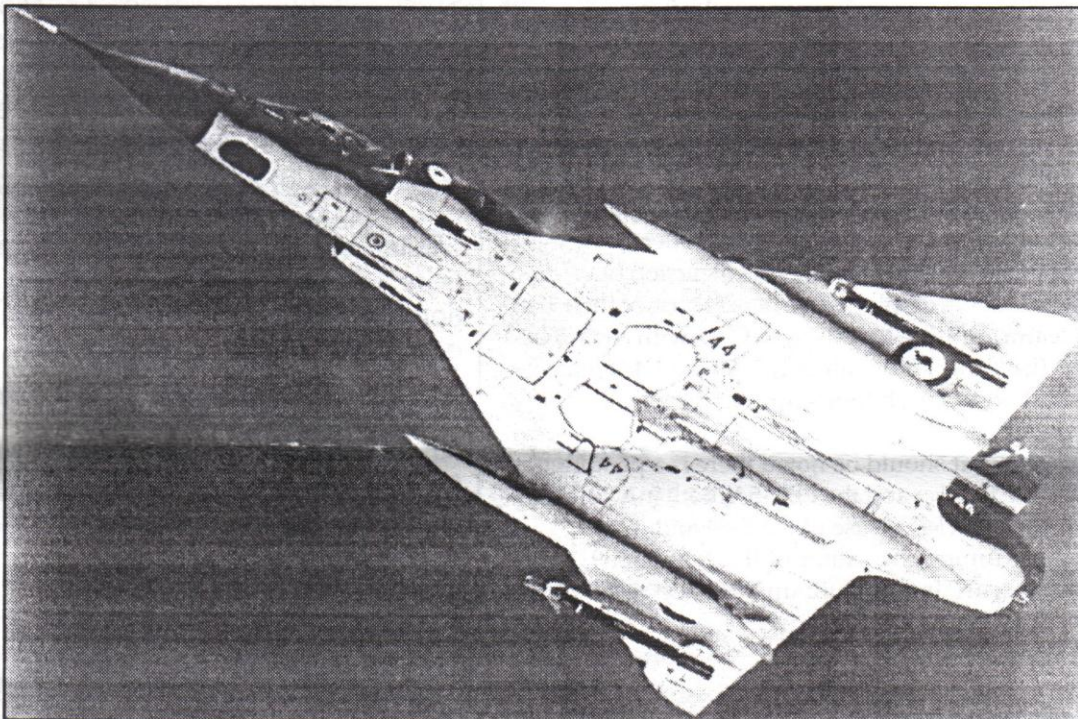
Mirage. Per my dictionary, something illusory, insubstantial. My thesaurus indicates "a strongly held but false belief, a delusion, a hallucination, phantasm, misconception." However you say or interpret it, this is not the case when you're referring to what in my book is France's finest postwar hour.

Marcel Bloch, the founder of the Bloch firm which produced many aircraft for the French Air Force into World War II, made it clear almost immediately upon his release from the concentration camp at Buchenwald that he was far from done designing aircraft.

Changing his name to Marcel Dassault, by 1946 he was at the helm of new aircraft maker Avions Marcel Dassault S.A. In the next 11 years, the *Ouragon*, *Mystere*, and *Super Mystere* jets provided evidence of Dassault's genius in the employment of the new turbojet as a fighter powerplant. In real terms, no company outside America and the former Soviet Union has had more jets in combat than Dassault.

The Korean War provided the lessons that led to Lockheed's development of the F-104 *Starfighter*, and they were not lost on Dassault. The *Mirages* I and II did see flight, but it wasn't until Marcel was ready did the Armee de l'Air get their hands on the triumphant *Mirage* III. While the first two *Mirages* were twin-engined, the *Mirage* III was powered by a single afterburning SNECMA Atar 9B engine, then the most power-

ful French jet available. The design took advantage of the new "area rule" concept in the fuselage design, and it was given the ability to fly from semi-prepared dispersed airstrips in event of a massive nuclear attack. Air-intercept radar untethered it from "ground control" unlike its contemporaries in the Soviet Union.



More than 20 nations purchased the *Mirage* III, including Australia. This shot of an Australian III-D highlights the plane's graceful delta planform.

Only nine months from the cancellation of the *Mirage* II, the III flew and nine weeks later showed off Mach 1.52 performance at 39,000 feet under measured and calibrated conditions in level flight. The plane's ceiling was 65,000 feet, and it could achieve Mach 1.6 without boost and Mach 1.9 with rocket boost.

By 1960, the French had the *Mirage* III-A, the two-seat III-B and the definitive III-C in front line service. Mach 2 performance was reached by the III-C, and with the *Mirage* III-E in 1961, Dassault laid the foundation for his delta's export successes that continue today. The *Mirage* III-E was also the basis for what evolved into Israeli Aircraft Factory's *Kfir*. Israeli employment of their original French III-Cs in engagements dates back to 1963 and became legendary in the 1967 Six Day War. The 1973 Sinai Conflict brought further glory to the *Mirage* and even the Argentines in the 1980s employed them over the Falklands. The Royal Australian Air Force has long been loyal to the *Mirage* III family, having selected it as replacement for the CAC *Sabre* over the EE *Lightning*, Saab

Continued on Page 8

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 September 2001 Styrene Sheet. Last month we returned to the Milpitas Library and also saw the return of Ralph Patino and other members. I tried a different format for that meeting by going through show and tell at faster pace than past practice. This was due to the hours that we were restricted to by the library. Luckily, we had enough time at the end so that everyone could mingle and talk, one on one, about the kits they brought.

In brief model aircraft news from the RCHTA show: *AMTech* was in attendance with the new 1:48 Ta 183 injection molded kit. *AMTech* announced other releases such as the drooped-nose C-135 in 1:72, a pair of Ju 88s also in 1:72, and a P-40E in 1:48. These four kits are based on *AMT's* molds from earlier releases, with the changes made to the new versions. *Historic Plastic Models (HiPM)* had the sprues on display for their new MiG-19 in 1:48. The MiG is to be produced in at least four variants. *Tamiya's* announced few releases as per past practices. They had a built up 1:32 F-4E *Phantom II* on display. This F-4 variant has been much anticipated since Ernie Gee did his conversion. The kit includes a clear nose and parts for the radar and gun assembly. The rest of the "new" releases in *Tamiya's* area were new only because of either their use of clear, "see-through" plastic, or a new sheet of decals, or their newest mold life-stretching venture, the inclusion of electric motors in their kits. On display was a new release of their 1:48 190D-9 featuring JV-44 decals, a MiG-15 with clear fuselage sections (isn't this kit out already?), and a 1:48 *Lancaster* "Dam Buster" bomber with four spinning props.

There were no new-tool aircraft kits in the *Revellogram* booth this year. But it should be noted there is a pending re-release of the F9F *Panther* and the PBV-5A, both in 1:48, along with the non-*ProModeler* release of the F-84 and Ju 52.

Hasegawa, confirming the rumor of the 1:32 Bf 109, had a picture of the box art, but no built up kit. They also had the sprues from the newly tooled 1:48 AH-64 *Apache* helicopter. The rest of their releases were new decals with previously kits.

Classic Airframes once again stole the show. They had built up kits of their 1:48 late version *Hudson* bomber, two versions of their 1:48 RE2001 kit, and the RE2000. Also on display was their built up 1:48 SM-79 *Sparverio*. Lou Orselli, relax, and breathe deeply! Time to place that *SMER* kit on eBay. Also announced was a DH *Hornet!*

Hobbycraft had their 2002 catalog on display that still shows the *Cougar* and *Panther* line as "new," along with the P-59s, and Canadian *Tutor*. They also announced a 1:48 A-10, but there were no details are provided (perhaps we'll know something about this kit within the next few years/millennium?). The rest of their announced releases were basically reissues of their older kits, with new markings.

MRC/Academy had the new 1:35 MH-60 *Pave Hawk* on display. They also listed a 1:155 B-58 *Hustler* and B47 *Stratojet*, but these are probably reissues of the *Hobbycraft* kits.

Our next club contest will be next month, in October. The subject of this contest will be "Air Racers" and "Missiles of October." Let's show Mike Meek that there are other members in the club that build Air Racers besides him.

We will be meeting back at the Los Altos Library this month.

I'm sorry for the flip-flopping of meeting sites, but I hope to have the use of the Milpitas Library for October and November. The meeting site for December has yet to be worked out. The meeting site will dictate whether or not we will have food, but there will be a gift exchange.

The IPMS/U.S.S. *Hornet* is having their model auction October 5 at the Western Aerospace Museum Theatre.

Next time: details of the 2002 gift exchange!

Until next time, Happy Modeling!

CONTEST CALENDAR

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 dneuman@as.net, or call Mike Valdez at (661) 258-1278 or e-mail him at mikentina@prodigy.net.

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Located on Orangethorpe between
Beach Blvd. and Western Ave.
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*When accompanied by a paying adult.

Vendor Setup
8:00 AM to 9:00 AM

Model entries,
Adults \$ 1.00 each
Young Adults Free
Juniors Free

INFORMATION

Model Contest Registration
9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

IPMS Orange County

P. O. Box 913

Contest Room Closed
12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

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Awards Presentation
3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

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Vendor tables must be reserved in advance, none will be available at the door.

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

California law requires that all vendors possess a valid California Resale Permit, and a copy be on file with our event.
Please enclose a copy of your permit with your payment. Temporary, "One Day" permits are available upon request.

Battle cattle: killer Cow-valry or moo-ving target?

By Kent McClure

The last vestiges of night are clinging tenaciously to the ground. You and a few of your squad mates are huddled in your trench. A small makeshift stove is trying to stave off the pre-dawn chill as it heats your coffeepot. You're talking softly, not about anything important. Just talking to remind yourself and your comrades that you're all still alive. You're all tired, fatigued down to the very marrow of your bones. You try to stay alert, wary of the attack that headquarters said was coming. But that was days ago, and you've seen nothing. Now the first rays of the sun herald the beginning of another day.

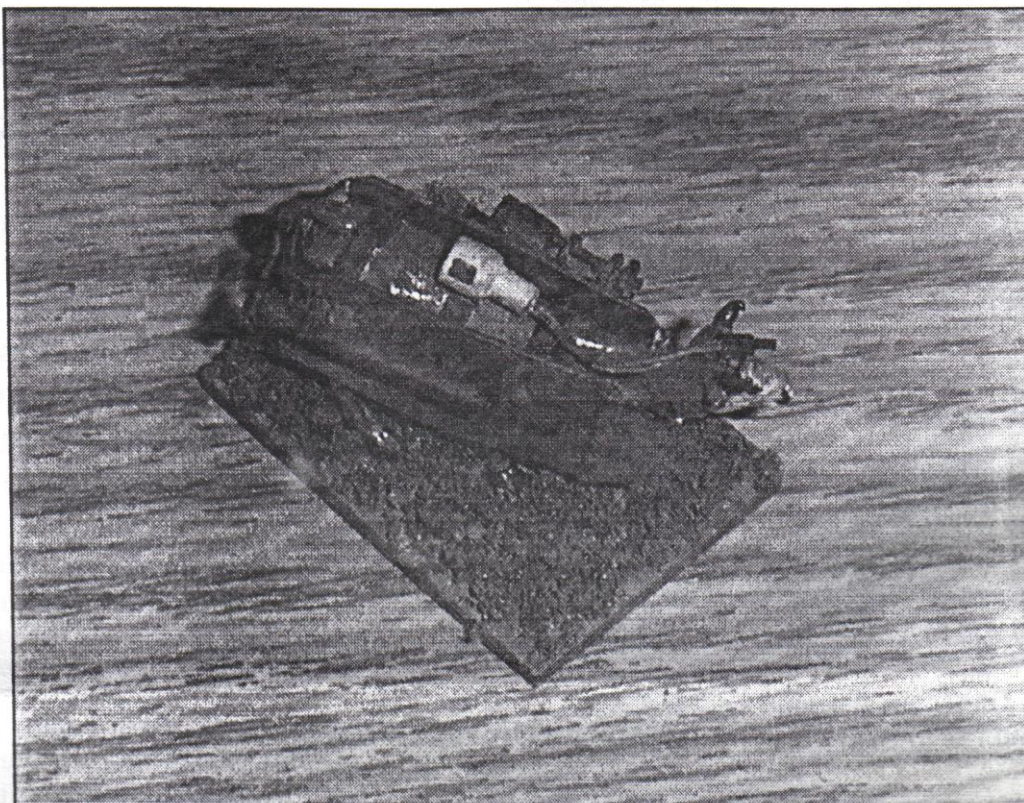
A shrill brassy bellow shatters the early morning calm. Instinctively you and your comrades grab your guns and take your places along the trench wall. You peer off to the east, squinting hard as you stare directly into the sun as it starts to climb above the flat plains. You think that you see something, but the blinding rays of the sun makes it difficult to be sure. But you hear a dull thudding sound and feel the ground shake. Somewhere off in the distance is the sharp staccato sound of a machine gun firing, and suddenly puffs of kicked up dirt bracket the top of your trench. You return fire blindly; then you're finally able to make out the shape of your enemy, stampeding straight for you with the sunlight glistening off their metallic hooves. You try to remain calm and fire accurately, but the thought of three-quarters of a ton of maddened, armored bovines thundering straight for you is unnerving, crying out for you to run away. Such is the fear of an assault by the dreaded "battle cattle."

Just what is "Battle Cattle?" Actually, it's a sort of role playing game. Think of *Spartacus* or *Gladiator* with a definite bovine twist. As the player, you are the owner of a stable of battle cattle that you outfit at your own expense and send to the arena floor to do battle against the champions of other ranchers. Victory means the glory and riches of the land. Defeat means hamburger and sirloin tip.

Battle Cattle is the brainchild of Wingnut Games of Brentwood, California, and I was introduced to it at ConQuest (a Bay Area wargaming convention) last year. It's a crazy game that allows you to customize your bovine warrior any way you want as long as you have enough money to buy the desired weapons, a big enough cow to be able to carry the weight, and enough slots in your harness to attach them. And

then you have at it.

When I played the game last year, a deal to commercially produce figures for it had not been made yet. But that was no hindrance to me. I decided to make my own. My first problem was to find some suitably cheap figures to start my conversion on. This sounded easier than it actually was. At first, I considered grazing the fertile field of the model railroad-ing world. The



Armed with a recoilless rifle, a rotary cannon and a flame thrower, Kent's battle cattle is equipped to dish out its own version of 'rare, medium and well-done.'

figures that I found there were too small for my liking—mere appetizers. I moo-ved over to the wargaming figures, and found some figures that were just beefy enough to work, but the price was just too high. I was about to put the idea out to pasture when, just for the fun of it, I thought that I should check out what the craft side of D&J's had. Low and behold, they had some plastic cows that were just perfect, and the price was cheaper than a MacDonald's hamburger. So I picked up a few and went home to see what I could cook up.

The figures were first cleaned up with a sharp, new blade in my trusty #11 X-Acto. They were then thoroughly washed to remove any residual mold release that they might have had on them (always wash your meat first). A harness was made out of some old lead foil from a bottle of wine (remember—red for meat, white for poultry) and superglued in place.

My specific battle cattle was to have skirted armor on its sides and a kevlar mesh protecting its front and rear. The armor skirt was made from some sheet styrene stock. I held it in place on the side of the cow and drilled a hole in it and the harness below. The top quarter of a pin was dipped into superglue and inserted into the holes. A nice benefit of this was that the pinhead made for a nice looking metal stud. The

front and rear kevlar mesh was cut from some fine brass mesh and superglued in place on top of the flank armor.

This particular cow is armed with recoilless rifle, a tri-barreled rotary cannon, and a flame thrower unit. I was hoping that my spare parts box would be able to spice up my cow, but that was an udder failure, so it was back to sheet styrene and rod. The recoilless rifle has a plastic rod barrel attached to a conical breech made from the end of a ball-point pen. A styrene disk was used to cap it off and a locking mechanism was made from some fine brass wire. The recoilless rifle was superglued to the ride side armor plate using two small pieces of scrap styrene as attachment points.

The tri-barreled rotary cannon was also built completely from scratch, although if I had a 1:72 Huey gunship I would have stolen the weapons off of that for this guy. The breech housing (or pod, or whatever you want to call the end the holds the gun's chamber and drive mechanisms) is made of a piece of conical plastic happily donated by another dried-up pen. The front end was capped off using really thin sheet stock, then had three holes marked off and drilled to accept the plastic rod barrels. The two spacer disks on the barrels are also thin sheet stock that were cut and trimmed to the proper shape. I used the holes in the breech housing as the guide for where to drill the holes in the inner most disk, then used the inner most disk as a guide for the outer one. I figured that that was the best way to get a fairly good alignment of the barrels. The back end of the weapon was capped off using thicker rectangular piece of stock that was just long enough to give me the offset that I needed. I filed half of the piece to match the contours of the housing and superglued the overhanging part to the left side armor plate.

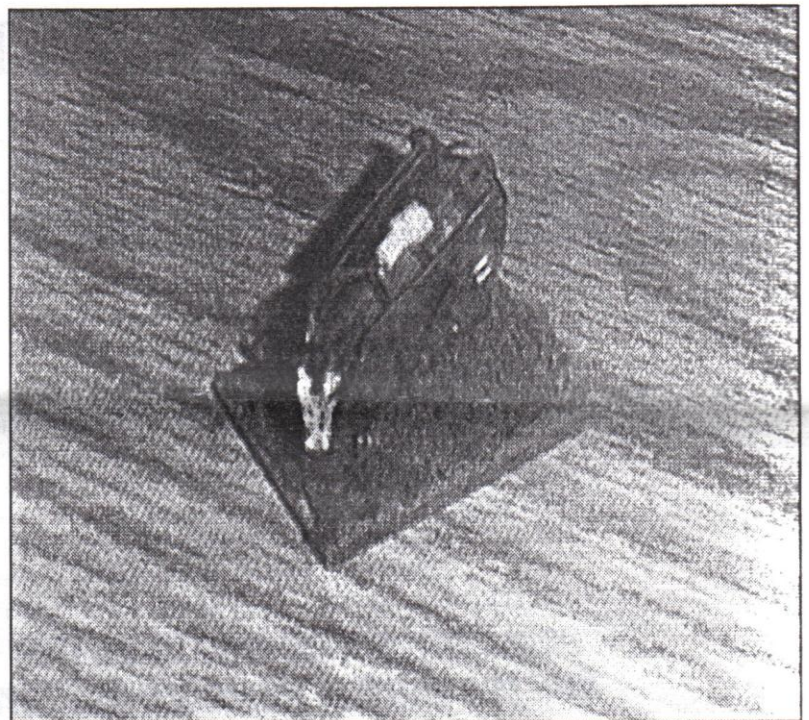
The final long range weapon is the head-mounted flamethrower unit. The tank is made up of two different sized plastic rods that were glued together and filed down to the length that I wanted. Two small holes were drilled into the end of the smaller rod to accept the hoses made out of fine wire. This unit was then glued to the back of the cow. The nozzle was made of two fine plastic rods, one inserted into the other and trimmed to size. Two more small holes were drilled and the "hoses" were attached. A small notch was cut into the cow's head between its horns, then filed with a rattail file until there was a good fit for the nozzle. A dab of superglue finished the job.

Once the cow was finally assembled, it was painting time. The entire figure was primed with Krylon white primer. It was then painted with various acrylic paints, mostly Polly S/ Polly Scale with a dash of Apple Barrel and Ceramcoat added in.

Luckily, I drive by the Milpitas foothills quite often so I got plenty of chances to look at the cattle that are out there grazing and find a color scheme that I like. I settled on a lighter brown color with a cream face and underbelly for the cow itself. The armor plating was painted a nice military looking green.

It was during the painting phase of this project where it became quite clear that this silly beast should have been painted during its various stages of construction. There are a few areas where painting the harness or the inside of the armor became a bit of a challenge. Just to add a little fun, the hooves, horns and tail were painted steel to give the cow a little more offensive nature and a kill marking was added to the side armor.

After letting it dry for a week, I bushed the cow with some MinWax Dark Walnut stain. The stain settled into the nooks and crannies of the cow and added some nice shading to it. A few days later, pastel chalks were used to weather the armor. The final touch was to attach it to a base and add some grazing



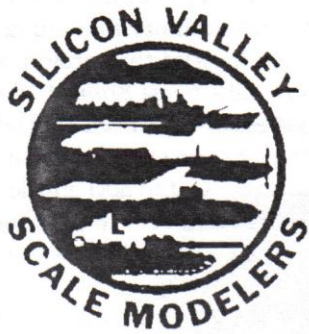
In about 1:48, Kent's killer cow is sheathed in kevlar body armor sufficient to resist all but the most lethal cow-poke.

material using some *Woodland Scenics* ground cover.

I entered it in our annual contest under the name of "Bovine Assault Unit, Mk III," just as something of a lark, and was very surprised when it got a third place in the sci-fi category. There are plans to build other variants of this beast, as well as some of its archenemies—the dreaded battle sheep and killer goat. But that's a story for some other time. And that ain't no bull.

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AYRTON SENNA MEMORIAL AWARD—BEST COMPETITION AUTOMOBILE • BEST CALIFORNIA SUBJECT

MIKE WILLIAMS MEMORIAL AWARD—BEST SCI-FI, FANTASY OR REAL SPACE SUBJECT

TED KAUFFMAN MEMORIAL AWARD—JUDGES' BEST OF SHOW (SENIOR) • BEST FLESH & BONES SUBJECT

BILL MAGNIE MEMORIAL AWARD—JUDGES' BEST OF SHOW (JUNIOR/YOUTH) • BEST 60TH ANNIVERSARY MIDWAY SUBJECT

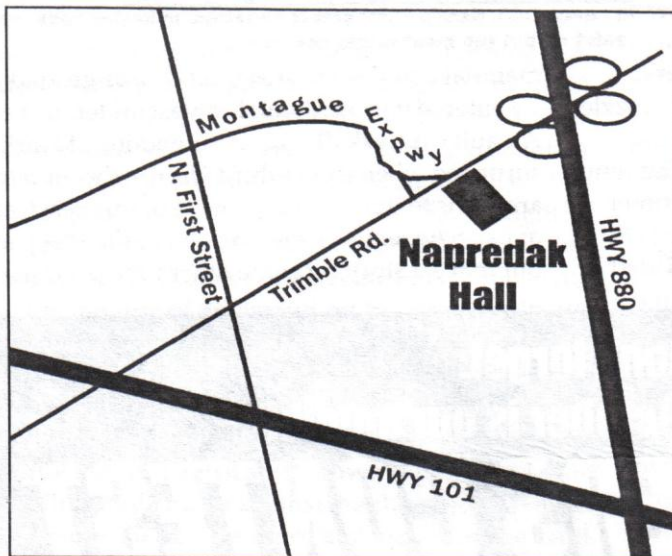
BEST BRITISH SUBJECT • BEST AIRCRAFT IN FOREIGN SERVICE • BEST VACUFORM • BEST AFV (INCLUDING SOFTSKINS)

BEST U.S. ARMOR SUBJECT, ETO, 1942-45 • BEST WW2 NORTH AFRICA THEATRE ARMOR SUBJECT • BEST AIR RACER

BEST NEED FOR SPEED THEME SUBJECT • BEST NON-TURRETED ARMOR SUBJECT (ANY ERA)

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TABLES ARE \$50 EACH IF PAID BEFORE DECEMBER 20, 2001;
\$55 EACH IF PAID BETWEEN DEC. 20 AND FEB. 10, 2000; \$60
DAY OF EVENT (IF AVAILABLE)

SENIOR (18+ YEARS)

- S1. Single Engine Jet or Rocket Aircraft, 1:72
- S2. Multi-Engine Jet Aircraft, 1:72
- S3. Single-Engine Prop or Turbo-Prop Aircraft, 1:72
- S4. Multi-Engine Prop or Turbo-Prop Aircraft, 1:72
- S5. Single-Engine Jet or Rocket Aircraft, 1:48
- S6. Multi-Engine Jet Aircraft, 1:48
- S7. Single-Engine Prop or Turbo-Prop Aircraft, Allied, 1:48
- S8. Single-Engine Prop or Turbo-Prop Aircraft, Axis and Neutrals, 1:48
- S9. Multi-Engine Prop or Turbo-Prop Aircraft, 1:48
- S10. Jet and Rocket Aircraft, 1:32 and larger
- S11. Prop Aircraft, 1:32 and larger
- S12. Biplanes/Fabric & Rigging, all scales
- S13. Rotary Wing Aircraft, all scales
- S14. Civil, Sport and Racing Aircraft, all scales
- S15. Jet, Prop and Rocket Aircraft, 1:144 and smaller
- S16. Military Vehicles, Softskin, 1:35 and larger
- S17. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Closed-Top, to 1945, 1:35 and larger
- S18. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Closed-Top, post 1945, 1:35 and larger
- S19. Armored Fighting Vehicles, Open-Top, 1:35 and larger
- S20. Towed Artillery and Ancillary Vehicles, 1:35 and larger
- S21. Military Vehicles, all types, 1:48 and smaller
- S22. Ships, 1:400 and larger
- S23. Ships, 1:401 and smaller
- S24. Automobiles, Stock, all scales
- S25. Automobiles, Custom (Other than Low-Rider style) all scales
- S26. Automobiles, Competition, Open-Wheel, all scales
- S27. Automobiles, Competition, Closed-Wheel, all scales
- S28. Automobiles, Specifically Styled as Low Rider, all scales
- S29. Space Vehicles, Fictional (Science Fiction or Fantasy), all scales and types
- S30. Space Vehicles, Real, and Missiles, all scales and types
- S31. Figures, Historical, all scales
- S32. Figures, Fantasy and Fiction, all scales
- S33. Out of the Box, all types and scales
- S34. Dioramas, all types and scales
- S35. Hypothetical Vehicles, all types and scales
- S36. Miscellaneous
- S37. Collections, all types and scales

JUNIOR (13-17 YEARS)

- J1. Aircraft
- J2. Military Vehicles
- J3. Automobiles
- J4. Dinosaurs and Figures
- J5. Miscellaneous

YOUTH (12 AND UNDER)

- SJ1. Aircraft
- SJ2. Military Vehicles and Ships
- SJ3. Automobiles
- SJ4. Miscellaneous

SPECIAL AWARDS

- SA1. Ted Kauffman Memorial Award—Judges' Best of Show (Senior)
- SA2. Bill Magnie Memorial Award—Judges' Best of Show (Junior/Youth)
- SA3. Arlie Charter Memorial Award—Best U.S. Army Air Corps Subject, Pacific Theater
- SA4. Ayrton Senna Memorial Award—Best Competition Automobile
- SA5. Mike Williams Memorial Award—Best Science Fiction, Fantasy or Real Space Subject
- SA6. Best Flesh & Bone Subject
- SA7. Best British Subject
- SA8. Best Aircraft in Foreign Service
- SA9. Best California Subject
- SA10. Best AFV (including softskins)
- SA11. Best WWII North Africa Theatre Armor Subject
- SA12. Best U.S. Armor Subject, ETO, 1942-45
- SA13. Best Air Racer
- SA14. Best Vacuform
- SA15. Best Non-Turreted Armor Subject (any era)
- SA16. Best Midway Subject Celebrating 60th Anniversary
- SA17. Best Weekend Warrior Subject (National Guard and Reservists)
- SA18. Best Small Air Forces Subject
- SA19. Best NEED FOR SPEED Theme Subject
- SA20. Tim Curtis Award—Given to honor service to the Silicon Valley Scale Modelers IPMS chapter

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 9 a.m.-noon—Registration; Contest Opens
- 11:45—Judges' Meeting
- 12:00-3 p.m.—Judging
- 4:15 p.m.—Awards Presentation

FEES

- Seniors: \$5 Registration, \$1 per model entered
- Juniors: \$1 Registration, .50 per model entered
- Spectators: Free

GENERAL RULES:

1. IPMS/USA rules and criteria will be used for this contest. However, no model may be handled by the judges. Model placement will be handled by the builder. SVSM invites members of other chapters to participate by joining our judging teams.
2. The contest director will make the final ruling on all disputes during the contest and may split or combine categories based on the number and nature of the entries.
3. No model that has won an award at an IPMS National contest is eligible, nor are any models that were first entered in any Re-

- gion IX competition prior to Feb. 27, 2000. SVSM appreciates the honor system, and hopes participants will as well.
4. SVSM asks that all contestants keep away from judging teams during the course of judging to ensure impartiality. Interference with judging teams by the contestants will be handled per IPMS/USA rules, and could render the offenders' models ineligible for award consideration.
5. All work done on model entries must be done by the entrant.
6. All contestants must have fun—otherwise, they aren't doing this right!

Making High Planes' Mirage III-D in 1:72

Continued from page 1

Draken, F-105 *Thunderchief* and, in the final round of evaluation, the then very competitive F-104 *Starfighter*.

It was in service with the Aussies into the late 1980s. After its selection, license built examples were constructed in Australia. One RAAF pilot with over 1800 hours in the *Mirage III* said that "Flying the *Mirage* was a memorable experience in my Air Force career, and although the F/A-18 *Hornet* is a world apart operationally, the Frenchy delta will remain engraved in my memory forever. It was a real fighter pilot's aeroplane, very responsive, and almost immune to turbulence thanks to its aerodynamic finesse-but it did have its defects!"

I doubt Marcel Dassault would have disagreed with that, but instead would have smiled at hearing a fighter pilot confirm that he had achieved his goals.

Today, another Australian provides a further compliment to this design's longevity and appreciation by its customers in the form of *High Planes* kit #72019.

Delta winged craft have always held a certain fascination for me. Domestically, the Convair family gained my modeling appreciation, but Marcel Dassault's airborne illusions hold just as powerful sway. The *Mirage* combat aircrews currently serve around the world, show the design's strength has not diminished by the passage of over 40 years since it first took to the air! It is likely it will surpass the MiG-21 (a lesser delta) for honors as the longest serving front-line fighter airplane.

A very satisfied customer is Australia, from where the excellent short run kit maker *High Planes Models* hails. Their Dassault *Mirage III-D* makes this Yank a very satisfied customer. The offering itself actually includes markings for a *Mirage III-BE* of the French Air Force, an *III-BD* from Belgium, and a *III-D* for the RAAF, but the box can accommodate only

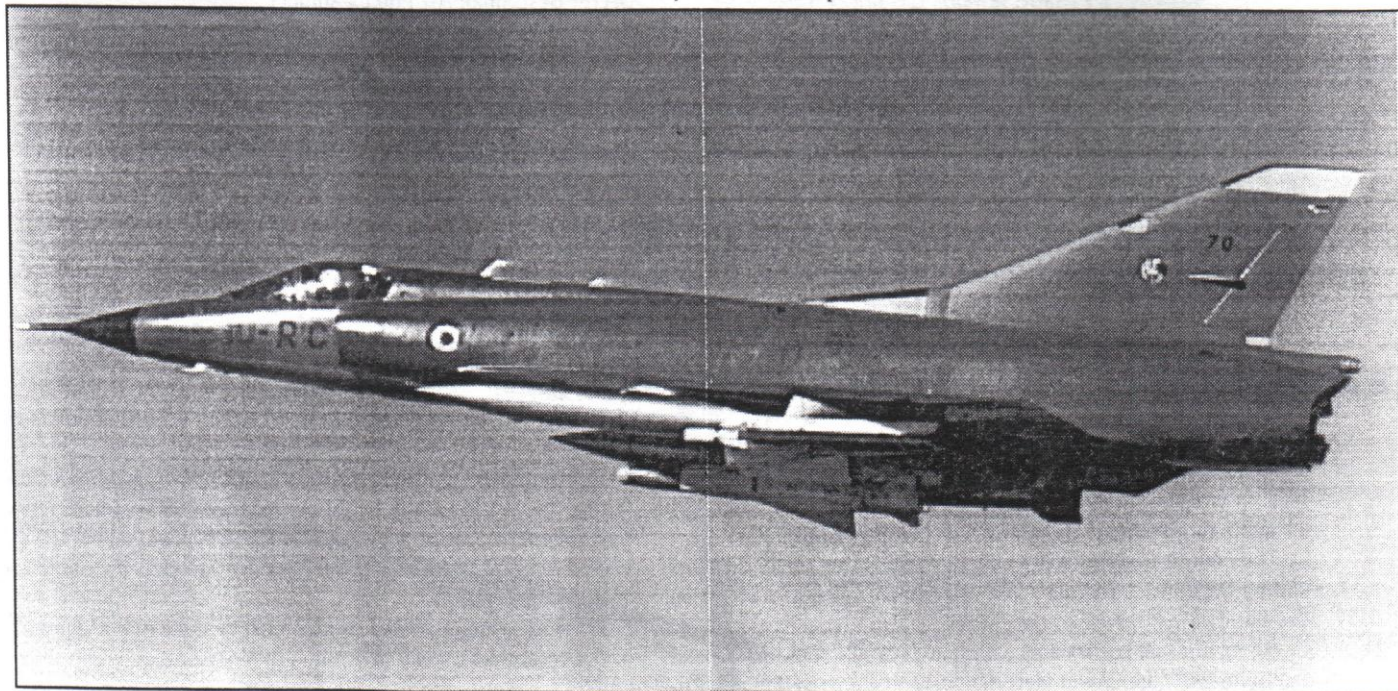
so big a title...!

The *Mirage* kit is joy upon opening. You'll be greeted by well-molded in plastic parts in aquamarine styrene, with a tree of fine white metal bits, one vacuform canopy of very good quality, a separately molded exhaust tube in white styrene and great little decals. Where the parts must be removed from the sprue, the mold designer demonstrates concern for the modeler. Wherever possible, the sprue gates "land" atop an inside surface, so the lovely surface details or carefully molded part profiles are preserved. Having plenty of experience repairing parts once they're off the sprue of kits by other major and short-run manufacturers who were not so thoughtful, I appreciate *High Planes* all the more.

As suggested by the instructions, I began with the cockpit floor/wall assembly. I assembled the basic parts and glued them to one cockpit half, saving the seats and other details for later. Only a small amount of flash cleanup is needed for the nose gear bay to be ready to be matched to the cockpit assembly.

I weighted the nose and carefully glued it together with the exception of the lower rear section to allow me to fit the exhaust cone later. When the fuselage was assembled, the proper final fitting of cockpit/nose gear bay was more precise. The rear bulkhead required a reduction in size (length and radius) to fit once the floor was positioned and glued into the fuselage. The instructions suggest assembling all items of the cockpit prior to installation into fuselage, but after going this far I decided against it.

The cockpit splitter bulkhead was next, and here I found confirmation that my method was working out. The bulkhead dryfitted fine, but the same part was too wide for the cockpit when it was mounted in the fuselage. I trimmed and fit it into place.



The most numerous single-seat version of the *Mirage III-D* is the *III-C*, like this French example. The *III-C* has been superseded by the *III-R* and the *Mirage 2000* in recent years.

With the bulkheads, walls and floor in place, dryfitting the metal components showed more work of the same sort ahead, so I shifted to other areas to maintain building momentum. The instructions state that to fit the wings, removal of plastic atop the wheel wells and corresponding points on the upper wings is required. It's actually possible to simply "flatten" the wheel well tops, which are part of the one-piece lower wing molding, and when done, clean up the edges of the lower and upper wings. For my *Mirage*, a strip of styrene scrap was glued in along the spine inside of the fuselage as a precaution, as there are no mechanisms like locator pins in this kit, and I wanted to prevent joints from cracking later while I was sanding. This is something I have often experienced with other short run kits and especially vacuforms.

I began to assemble the wings by using the fuselage as a jig, taping the lower wing more or less into place and then matching each upper wing to it, all the while checking for fit. Gaps were present no matter what I did at some points, and I saw that the wings would be high at the fuselage on the top side, but I went ahead and glued the wings together carefully. Then, trying out the exhaust cone again, I confirmed that leaving the rear of the fuselage un-glued was wise. When the wings were glued to the fuselage, they left a fair amount of open space at the nosewheel bay and cheek intakes area but a near perfect join at the rear underfuselage.

Slipping in the exhaust cone took some "eyeballing" as the actual placement is not provided nor confirmed by instructions or the drawings. My recommendation is that you insert this part up to the "feather ring" juncture inside the fuselage, not slightly outside like mine is. The vertical fin is a one-piece molding, thin but with a good airfoil cross section and inscribed details. However, again it provides no methods of mating it to the fuselage, so I drilled two holes and put in sprue pins, then drilled corresponding holes in the exhaust tube in fuselage along the "gapped" spine. With these pins, fitting and gluing this part to fuselage was very easy. Blending it in required only a bead of superglue on each side and a little sanding.

The rocket motor housing, which fits under the tail and runs along the bottom of the fuselage, was next. This required some amount of dry fitting and trimming to shape as it has to mate both to the fuselage

and the wing moldings, and it doesn't match up with either on the first try.

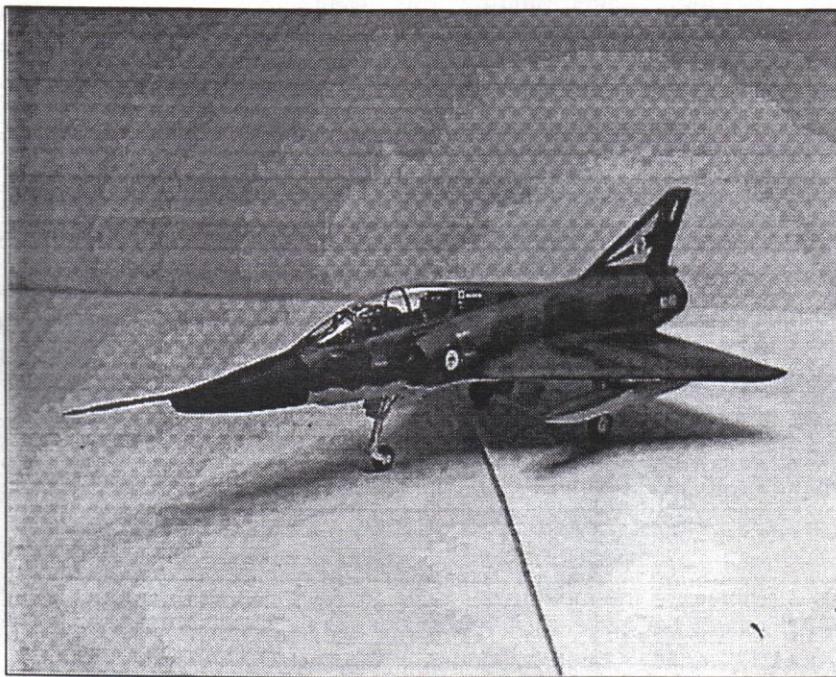
Up at the other end of this wing and fuselage join were plenty of gaps that required the use of scrap styrene to blend

the intake cones and intakes. These moldings are tricky, and fit on and over one another. For one side, my end result was small gap at the bottom of the intake. On the other side the entire arc of the intake lip had to be replaced. Along the top edge of intakes, the intake cone wall forms the edge and these seams were blended in quickly.

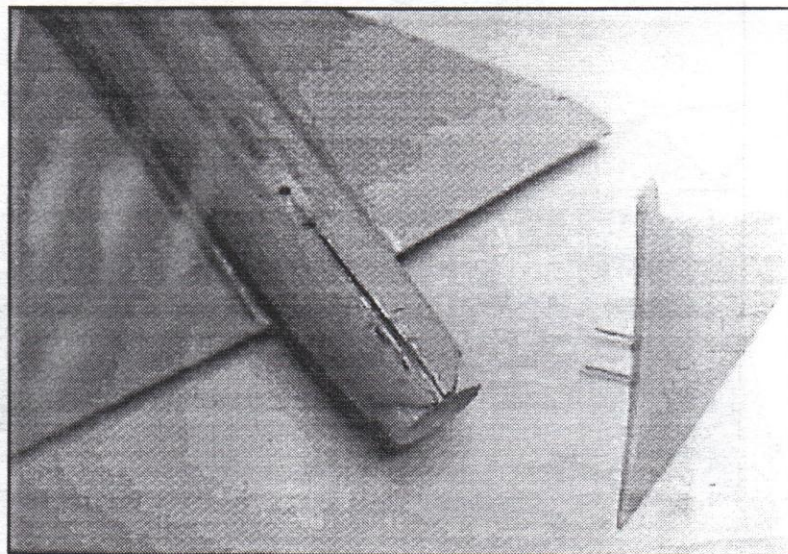
Now, it became time to face the finishing up of the cockpit interiors and that called for vacuform canopy cutting and initial fit. The metal seats are well detailed and with careful painting come out really nice without any further ad-

ditions. However, like the instrument panels, they required a lot of cutting and filing to get them into the cockpit bays. The seats were especially finicky, and when they looked right they were still too high to allow the canopy to fit! Someone more clever than me might have simply cut the canopy and posed it open, but that wasn't what I wanted, so away went the offending metal!

Fitting the canopy was the bane of existence. Superglue will frost the insides of vacuform canopies but it holds well and can be sanded. I like to secure thin canopies like this with beads of watch crystal cement, then seal this up with a layer of acrylic floor wax or *Humbrol Clear Fix*. Only then do I apply



Mike's finished model shows off the colorful Australian markings provided in the *High Planes* kit.



Mike used small pins to hold the vertical tail in place. The use of these pins made fitting easier and gave a stronger bond to the parts.

super glue, which then can only frost the outside of the canopy, which gets scuffed by sanding anyway and will be polished later.

Implanting the metal nose pitot boom involved drilling a hole in the nose fairing and gluing, filling, sanding. The landing gears for this model are all white metal, and the nose gear is one piece including the wheel and tire while the mains have the wheel and tires separate. I mounted my metal landing gear struts unpainted, leaving off only the gear doors. The drop tanks are optional on *Mirages*, but after looking at it awhile, putting them on seemed the better idea. *High Planes'* moldings here are a bit less artful than in the rest of this kit, but slowly gluing them a little at a time while keeping one end taped together kept them aligned. The pylons are part of the tank moldings but since they are so slender, not very deep and quite thin, it really is easy to mistake them for a misaligned joint or mere flash. Again, microdrilling and fitting sprue pins helped mount these tanks to the bottom of the wings before painting.

Another component that proved to be best glued in slow increments were the undernose cable ducts, again partly because they aren't really demarcated for mounting and are small, thin parts.

Deciding on the paint scheme for the model was easy. Although the *Mirage* is a distinctly French product, this was after all an Australian model company's carefully rendered labor of love, and the camouflage scheme is plenty attractive with its special markings, so my model became *Mirage III-D* (dual) # A3-102 of No. 2 OCU (Operational Conversion Unit), used in the 1980s in a variety of manners. If you so desire, making this aircraft in natural metal with its attractive trim

colors is possible with these same decals and some "opposite color codes" (since the camo ones are white and you need black). I used acrylics for the NATO-style green and gray topsides, with enamel for the light gray underside. Painting went smoothly for the most part. I left the black nose cone left for last.

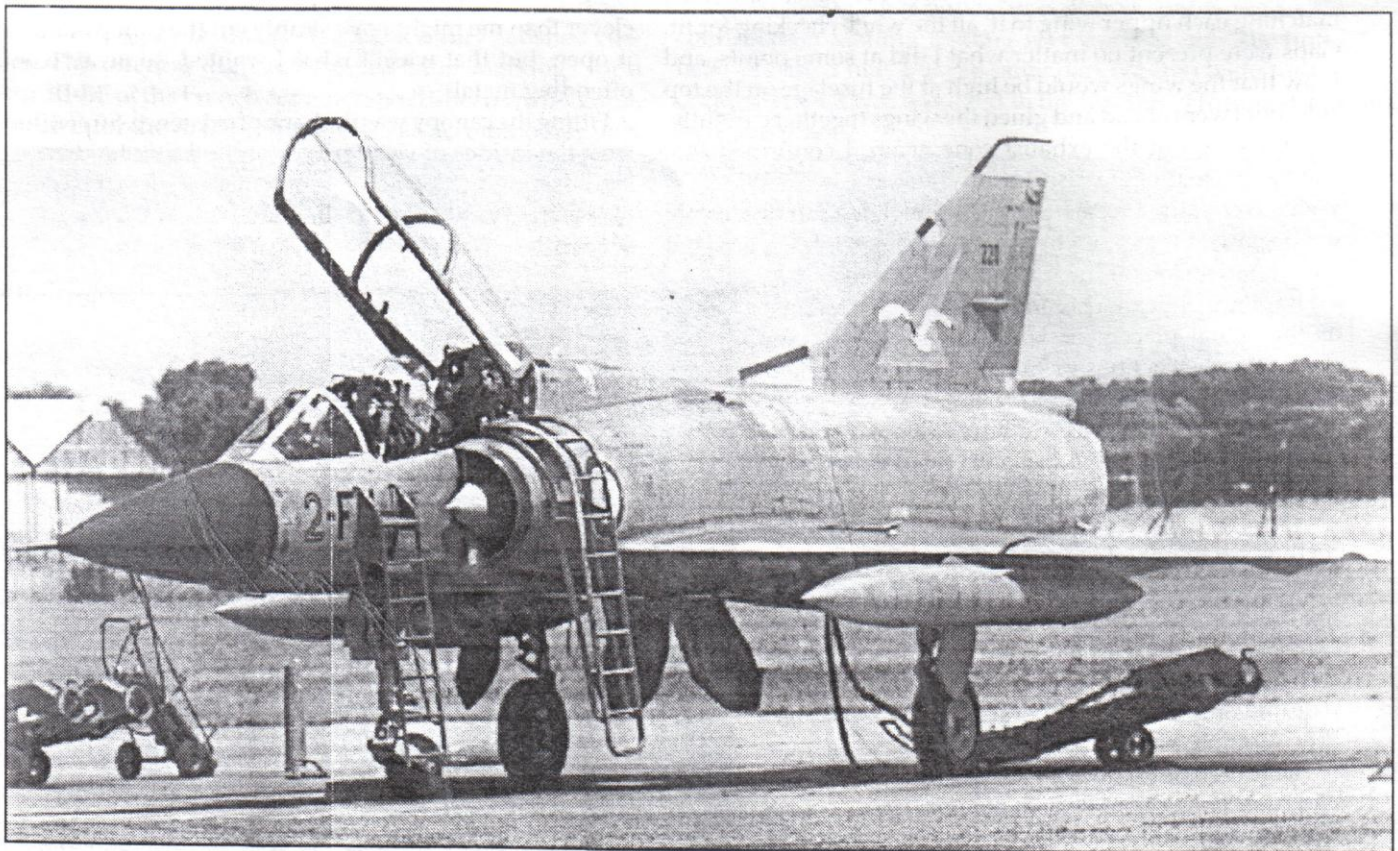
Here is why vacuform canopies are the bane of my existence. Leaving the canopy masked to finish the nose, I was trying to avoid handling the freshly painted body and held the aircraft by the canopy. Unfortunately I squeezed too hard and felt the canopy give. When I removed the masking, my suspicions were confirmed: the squeeze had made the canopy flex along the joint that I had so carefully spent so long blending in, and a large flake of sanded superglue had come off. This was deeply disappointing, and at this point there was no way I was redoing the entire finish.

Instead, I began a slow and careful filling of this awful divot with water-soluble clear glue until it nearly reached the height of original line and then painted it to hide it to casual viewers. It wouldn't stand up to a judge's eye, but it's not intended to.

I used all kit decals, and they went on without any problems. A semi-matte final overspray was all that was required to blend them all in.

In the end, it's very attractive in its camouflage with the lovely canary yellow and black wedge on tail and the "roundel 'roos" in all the right places.

In conclusion, I would say you really ought to give *High Planes'* *Mirage* Family a chance to become more than a figment of your scale imagination. Many thanks to *High Planes* and Chris Bucholtz for providing my chance to get one built.



Mirage III-B trainers remained on strength with the French Armée de l'Air until the mid-1980s. The III-B differed from the III-D in the powerplant.

Modifying a PT (Preposterous Tow) Cruiser flatbed

By Greg Plummer

In the June 2001 issue of *Scale Auto Enthusiast* magazine, they announced the "Build a PT Cruiser" contest. The rules are simple: use Revell's #1914 PT Cruiser snap kit, build it any way you like, and then send in at least four color slides or prints of the completed model (no Polaroids, please). There is also the strange rule that you could submit more than one entry but only one entry per person would be judged, but I digress.

So, a PT Cruiser anyway you like, eh? Well, I knew I had to do something different for a couple of reasons. First, I wasn't going to put a lot of time into a Kwicky-Snap PT Cruiser kit, so I wasn't going to score on detail and finesse. Second, I do things different anyway.

Thinking stratigical like, I knew the following ideas are going to be entered by other modelers

and thus were scratched off my list. There are going to be drag car versions of various sorts, a NASCAR knock off (yeesh), a sedan delivery body, a woodie body, a "ute" pickup body (the previous four are available in resin), mild and wild custom jobs, a nostalgia primer rod (my buddy

Steve Hinson built that already and is entering it), and quite possibly a stretch limo, as real examples exist.

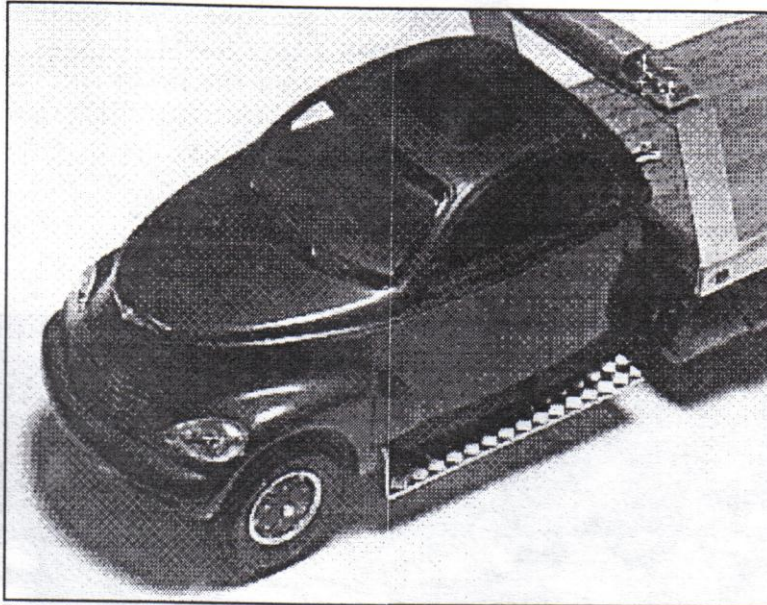
Not much was left to work with—but then I had the idea for a medium duty truck body based on the Cruiser. The PT Cruiser is in fact classified as a light truck by Daimler Chrysler for CAFE standards (and no, that's got nothing to do with parking in front of Starbuck's).

Knowing I'd need a cab of some sort, I started working on that part of the body, not exactly knowing what would be behind it.

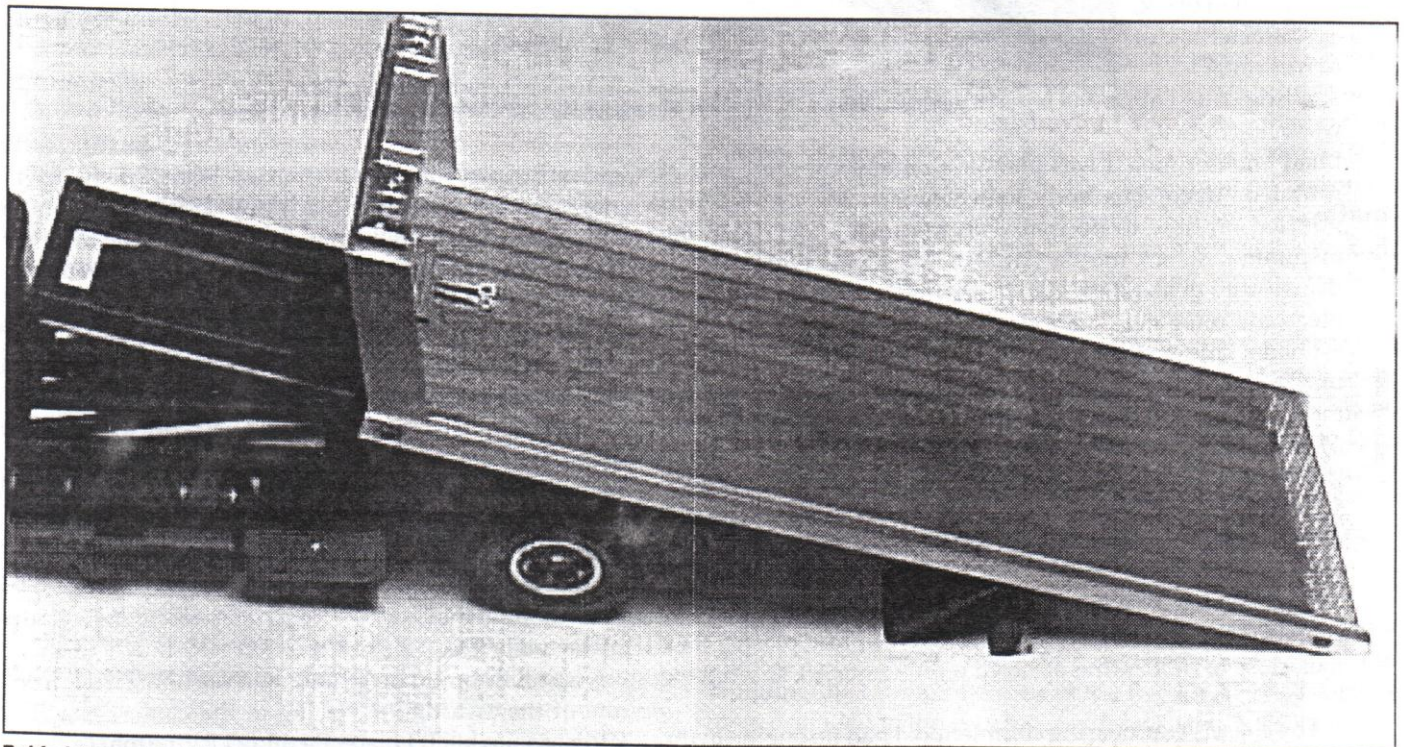
The top was chopped off the PT kit body, and the rear door window segment was cut out. The remaining pieces were glued together, forming the top of the cab. The front fender/grill unit was also cut away to be used later. All the remaining body parts were not used—really, there's not too much of the PT Cruiser kit left, but then they said to build it anyway you'd like. By the way,

the PT Cruiser snap kit has a lot of nice detailing, despite a lack of an engine and a one-piece chassis, and the body is right on in terms of looks and proportions. With some major work in the engine bay an accurate replica can be made from this kit.

A curved strip of .030 styrene was glued to the bottom of the



The can of the PT tow truck, with its chopped roof and truncated tail end, looks even more like a 50s hot rod.



Behind the cab is this: a mahogany bed and a largely scratchbuilt rear chassis. The wheels came from a 1:32 fire truck kit.

hood, forming the "bull nose" I was after. The front fender/grill unit was then glued to the strip. The front door sides and the lower rear of the cab were simply made from sheet styrene curved on edge to match the top's overhead profile. To hide the seam, a halfround plastic rod molding was glued at the cab top and side joint, except at the front.

The usual putty and primer job came next, and the cab was given a few coats of Ford Currant Red automotive touch up paint. Not a Chrysler color? This is car modeling, any color you like will do. A quick polishing after the clear coats were applied resulted in a cab body that was suitable for photographing, though not for close examination. As a bonus, the kit's front and back "glass" and headlight unit still fit in the custom cab.

The interior was cut down to match the cab, and the rear bench seat was used in front to give a truck like feel to the innards. The whole assembly was painted flat black with no detailing at all—not much can be seen through the PT's windows anyway, especially after I tinted them with a coat of Tamiya spray gloss black. This paint makes for a very realistic "limo" tint with a single coat on the inside of the clear plastic pieces. The windshield was not tinted, but it's inner border area was painted black, as characteristic of newer cars.

While the cab was being built up, I had another idea. I was planning on making some sort of rounded "deco" box body to accompany the cab, but was puzzled on how to do that with minimal effort. Then the inspiration struck me—a flat bed tow truck. Working at a British auto dealership, I get to see plenty of these trucks, so ideas and references were close at hand.

I had a ladder chassis made out of Evergreen stock already underway. I added a not-very-prototypical but working slide mechanism to the chassis. Wheels and axles came from Monogram's 1:32 Snap-tite fire truck kit. The wheels have a great "retro" look to them, and since this was a medium duty 1:25 model the heavy duty 1:32 stuff looked and fitted right. And some car modelers worry about the 1:25 vs. 1:24 difference—Jeez!

The "chromed" wheels were repainted in silver with red centers. The hollow back tires were left in raw plastic; they look close to rubber tires sprayed with ArmorAll, so what the heck.

The chassis was nearing completion. I had no engine in the model—just plastic sheet to block off any light that might

come through the front wheel wells. I did have an exhaust pipe complete with a big aluminum slash cut tip—this tow truck is going to have style. A strachbuilt storage box was put on the right side of the chassis, while a fuel tank and an additional box from Italeri's truck accessories kit was added to the left.

The bed was based on a piece of sheet plastic. Plastic stock stringers were glued on top, leaving room for the mahogany wood planks that would go inbetween them. Cross members and C-section plastic slide rails were glued on the bottom. Originally I had made the bed much too large in relation to the cab; I had to cut it down later. Measure once, cut twice I guess. A plastic sheet top bar was added and the unit was sprayed with Tamiya silver leaf.

The wood strips were inserted into the bed and the bed was then slid onto the chassis. The interior was epoxied into the cab. After it had set the unit was glued onto the chassis. Final

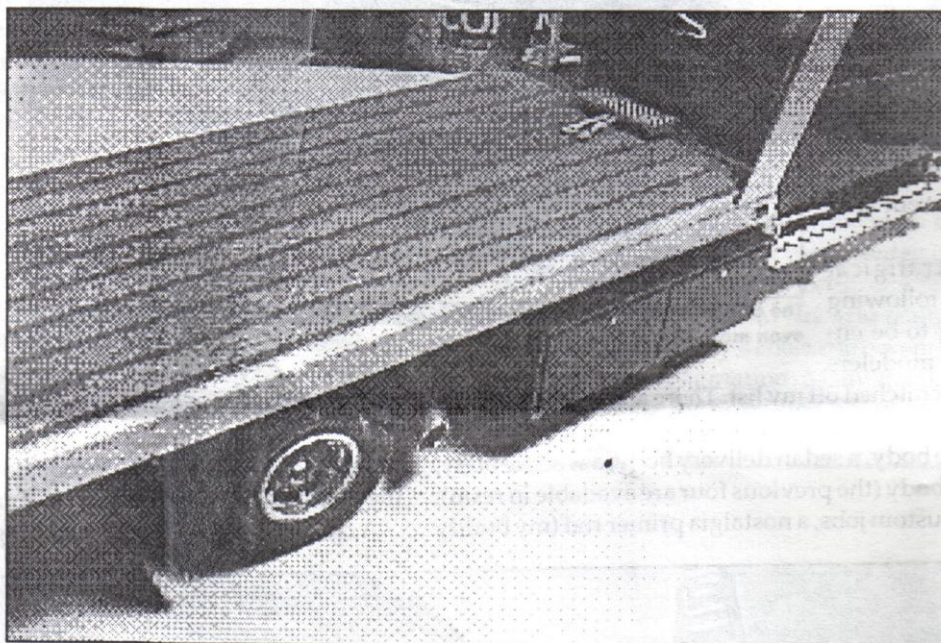
details consisted of an emergency light bar and several running lights from the Italeri accessories kit, plus a pair of diamond plate running boards from the same set. In the Italeri kit there was also a set of mudflaps with those tasteless nudie girl profiles molded on them; I used those too.

Flat bed tow trucks, or rollbacks as they're often called, are usually plastered with gaudy lettering

and pinstripes; I decided for the time being to leave the PT tow plain. It's a lot less work, anyway. I did add a photo-etch Chrysler emblem on the hood's nose; this was from the 18th Greater Salt Lake model car championship entrant's gift set, although a regular photo-etch set for the PT is available from the Model Car Garage.

There—a finished Revell kit #1914 PT Cruiser kit based flat bed tow truck model. With all the plastic stock, the Italeri parts kit, and the Monogram fire truck kit parts put in it, the total cost of this model came out to around \$70. At least I got a big model for my bucks—it's over 13 inches long and about a pound in weight. I'm happy with the results, plus it will hold a car model on the bed. That'll save on display space.

I had rushed the construction of this model due to the fact I had thought the deadline for photos was Spet. 15. It turns out it's actually Dec. 15, not that I'd add much to the model anyway. I'll submit my photos and see how I'll do. Ironically, one of the awards for placing in the contest is a Revell PT Cruiser snap kit. If I place, I'll think I'll give that prize away....



In the lowered position, Greg's PT Wrecker shows off the hardwood floors of the tow bed.



This French-operated S-19 (actually a British-built Whirlwind) was used for medical evacuation duties in French Indochina in 1954. This version differs from the H-19B in that the tail rotor boom is straight. Later S-19 types had a slight downward cant to the boom.

Italeri's helicopter streak continues with H-19 family

By Laramie Wright

Following the end of World War II, there was a growing interest in military circles regarding the use of helicopters. Primitive Sikorsky R-4s had been operational in the last months of the war in the China-Burma-India theater, where they foreshadowed the future, being used for pilot rescue and medical evacuation missions.

Bell, Piasecki and Sikorsky were the major U.S. companies developing rotorcraft and working with the military to develop doctrine and tactics for a new era of aviation. The Bell 47 is well known and remembered for its role during the Korean War as an aerial ambulance, forever fixed as a pop culture icon, thanks to the movie and TV series "M*A*S*H." Less well known, but very important during the Korean War was the Sikorsky H-19 *Chickasaw*, which served with all U.S. armed forces.

The *Chickasaw* was of all metal semi-monocoque construction and it set the standard for its day.

Like most of its contemporaries, the *Chickasaw* was somewhat under powered. Nevertheless, the bird became a successful and widely used design. Most U.S. allies also used the H-19 and it was license produced in Britain as the *Whirlwind* by Westland. The design was used in a great many roles, from troop transport to aerial ambulance to antisubmarine platform. There was even a U.S. Army flight demonstration team that used a quartet of *Chickasaws* garishly painted with eyes and smiles in square dancing routines that pleased many an

airshow audience.

Italeri's kit is molded in their customary medium gray plastic and is well molded. There are 53 components on two gray sprues and one of clear for the canopy and windows. The overall level of detail is very good, with only a tiny bit of flash here and there. The breakdown of the sprues shows that further versions are on the way. The kit is of a later model B used in the late '50s-early '60s. The subsequent release of the -A version allows the modeler to build a Korean War era bird. The panel lines are engraved and match up well although they are a tad heavy in areas. Grilles and screens are well rendered as is the landing gear and wheels. Clear areas are well done, clear with minimal distortion.

The pilots' compartment has a good basic interior with instrument panel and coaming, consoles, bulkheads, seats, cyclic sticks and well-rendered panels representing the engine compartment insulation. Some more detail is warranted and I will add rudder pedals, collectives, and various other pieces to more completely furnish the office. The cargo/passenger compartment is well represented with fabric webbing seats and nicely detailed bulkheads.

Test fitting of the parts indicates that fit is good and only minimal filing and filling will be required. I look forward to building the *Chickasaw* as one of the two USAF rescue choppers provided in the very nice kit decal sheet. Nice kit *Italeri!* Keep those early egg-beaters coming.

AUGUST MINUTES

At the August meeting, we discussed location for the club meetings—including the December gift exchange—and we'll continue to work toward a solution. In the meantime, the September meeting will be held at the Los Altos Public Library.

In model talk... Ralph Patino returned with a Revell 1:512 model of the seaplane tender U.S.S. *Pine Island*, which is serving as a testbed for the five-foot version he's scratchbuilding at home! Ralph also built a 1:72 *Hindenberg* from scratch, but he can't fit it into his car! Bert McDowell is also doing some scratchbuilding, working on patterns for an upcoming kit of the Liberty Ship S.S. *Jeremiah O'Brien* in 1:350. Bert says the final kit will come in four flavors: waterline and full hull, each with a high tech or "for dummies" version. Cliff Kranz is trying to build all three of the Lockheed YF-12s, and his 1:48 model of Number 936 is a step in that direction. Cliff finally got his *Blackbird* into black paint after six years! Brad Chun let the *Sabre Dogs* out, showing off F-86Ds from Revell of Germany and *Monogram* side by side in the bare plastic. The European kits depict the late style, with parabrake housing, while the domestic kit shows the early style without the housing. Chris Hughes built his DML 7.5cm LG40 recoilless rifle in a transport mode, complete with the hands of its handlers already included! Chris also built a DML 5cm PAK 38 anti-tank gun, which he completed only after redoing the tread on the wheels. Jim Lund got the club mixed up in a numbers game with his Boeing 720 in Continental Airlines colors. Jim modified the wing roots and demilitarized and AMT KC-135 to yield a specialized airliner. Ron Wergin couldn't stick with one theme this month, building a Revolutionary War British soldier by *Valiant Miniatures*, a 1:700 Japanese destroyer, a 1:72 *Academy* P-40M and an oldie, a 1:32 *Seafire* conversion just about ready for paint. Mike Burton spread his models (among other things) around, but they included such items as a 1:48 *Hasegawa* F4U-4 *Corsair*, which will wear the Olathe, Kansas reserve markings given out at the Chicago Nationals. Mike's other 1:48 adventure was a Bf 109G-12 two-seater, built with the *Falcon* conversion and the *Otaki* Bf 109G kit. In 1:72, Mike had a host of subjects, including a Canadair CL-41 trainer in Malaysian markings, built from the *Hobbycraft* kit, a *Frog Westland Wyvern*, a DML P-61A *Black Widow* finished in Western Pacific markings, an *Italeri* B-25 that awaits its British colors, an An-7 Russian assault glider built from the *Wings* 72 kit, and a collection of Pioneer Jets: the

P-59 *Airacomet*, the Whittle E.28, the He 178, the Campini Caproni, the *Kikka*, the MiG-9 and the Yak-15. Robin Powell used 10 sources to build his *Spitfire* XIVe, starting with an *AeroClub* fuselage and an *Academy* wing and adding bits from *Cooper Details*, *Tamiya*, *Airfix*, *Hobbycraft*, *Hasegawa* and *Falcon*. Robin spent much less time on his *Hurricane* IIc from the *Hasegawa* kit, but he's likely to spend far more time on his *ID Models* 1:72 C-5, which he plans to fully re-scribe. Chris Bucholtz added a *Verlinden* interior to his *Academy* F6F-3 *Hellcat*, and will pirate the cowling, rudder and various other bits from the *Hasegawa Hellcat* before he's finished. Kent McClure complained that the *Kendall Model Company* conversion to a gun-toting M3 halftrack positions the weapon too high, and he may have to modify this model to get the sit right. Dennis Ybe took a while, but he's finally finished his model of his own Nissan 300ZX. He painted the model with *Model Master* enamels, and used *Bare Metal Foil* chrome and black chrome on the various moldings. Dennis also had a sweet Ford Mustang, which he'd finished with *Tamiya* spray paints and some polishing, and a second *Mustang*—this one with wings—from the *Hasegawa* kit. Dennis is readying this model for a bare metal finish. Laramie Wright was going great guns on his *Hasegawa Spitfire* V until Roy Sutherland sold him a *Cooper Details* interior set, which slowed things way down! Laramie's also building a 1:48 *Hasegawa* Zero Type 32 "Hamp," which he says fits very well, and a *Tamiya* Mathilda tank, to which he's added scratchbuilt details like the gun breech and radio equipment. Mike Braun lost—but then found—the lower wing of his 1:72 *Hasegawa* A-3B *Skywarrior*, which he says he'll build straight from the box. Mike may be distracted from this by his 1:32 *Tamiya* A6M5 Zero, which has several working features and exceptionally clever engineering. Just after Robin Powell contemplated sticking a CH-53 in his C-5, Thang Le walked in with his *Italeri* kit, in a low-vis scheme depicting a Marine Corps CH-53E. Mike Meek has his *Conquest One Bearcat* from *High Planes* mounted on its base and awaiting paint. He says the model is a lot of work, but it's accurate. Mike is also trying to make a *Revell* Corvette C5R more accurately depict the car running this year in the American Le Mans series, modifying a *Scale Designs* resin transkit. Ken Miller has an assortment of 737s from an assortment of different manufacturers half-assembled for his Aloha Airways project. Postoria Aguirre is trying to build a Pontiac collection by acquiring built-ups and rehabilitating them. His

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latest effort in that direction is a '61 Bonneville he acquired on eBay. Steve Travis used a real fiberglass body to finish AMT's kit of Don Garlits' Windjammer hot rod, then applied a glitter-laden paint job to the car. Dave Balderrama is getting small, showing off in-progress kits of the Berkut, 767 AWACS and YF-23 in 1:144 from *Revell* of Germany. Vladimir Yakubov rebuilt everything above the waterline on his round coastal defense monitors, dating back to Russian military efforts on the Black Sea in the 1870s. The kit from *Samek* was okay as a hull, but not acceptable to Vladimir from there up. Vladimir says he only used the big parts in building his KB-1 autogyro, which he totally reassembled for HornetCon—but didn't finish quite in time! Paul Burnett is building a Wedell-Williams racer that he and his dad had worked on; Paul will complete the racer as "Miss New Orleans." Back in the world of figures, Paul built the *Polar Lights* re-release of the *Aurora* Bride of Frankenstein and added touches like casting resin in the clear "glassware" to add some, er, life to the model. Roy Sutherland has reworked the rocker covers on *Airfix's Spitfire* 22/24 kit, and he also added his own *Cooper Details* interior

and exterior resin sets to the model, which is nearing the painting stage. Aiden McMackin says his mom liked the Gee Bee racer, so he built one from the *Testors* kit. He also built a 1:72 Flak 88 with its prime mover, and a 1:720 *Tirpitz*, that isn't quite done. Aiden says a bit of dust that got attached to the mast will double as a scale bird's nest! Hubert Chan had a host of armor kits on the table, including a *Karo/As* T-38 resin kit that he reworked with a new suspension and brass fenders; a Panzer 38Tc from Italian manufacturer *Kryjel* that's essentially a reworked Italeri 38T with a stepped glacis plate; a DML JS-2, with new brass fenders; and an *Accurate Armor* BT-7, which Hubert says has a lot of flaws. The models were complemented by crews built with parts from DML, *Warriors*, *Verlinden* and *Hornet*. And the model of the month goes to... Greg Plummer, for his rice rocket roll sushi display! There, on a sushi plate, between scale sliced ginger and wasabi, was his *Fujimi* Nissan Cefiro Euro lowrider and his *Tamiya* Mitsubishi World Rally Car Evolution, which he's turned into a street rod. Greg also brought the soy sauce, just in case anyone got hungry!

SVSM BOOKSHELF

Israeli Sherman: Tracing the history of the Sherman tank in Israeli service.

By Thomas Gannon

MSRP: \$39.95

Availability: direct from publisher at www.darlingtonproductions.com

Dumb, dumb, dumb. When will I remember: do not buy a new reference book before the kit is finished! Okay, enough self punishment and on to the review. This is a hardcover book, 240 pages long with 470-plus photos, all black and white except for the cover photo and four photos on the back. (The book doesn't have a dust cover but reminds me of my high school biology book, glossy cover with a photo.)

There are nine chapters and an appendix. The chapters are: Sherman Primer, First Israeli Shermans, Early Shermans, M50/M51 Series, Israeli "Panzerstellung," Self-Propelled Guns, Recovery Vehicles, Specialty Shermans and Where Are They Now?

Each chapter starts with text about the vehicle the chapter covers: when it was produced, what mods were done, and service life. After the text there are numerous photos to support the statements made in the text.

The author states in his introduction that the book is an attempt to sort out the true facts about the Sherman in Israeli service using photos and some logical assumptions based on available data. Apparently Israel is still keeping a tight lid on any official information regarding what and when Shermans were modified.

All the photos are clear and sharp. I wished that some had numbers or arrows to point to what is being talked about in the captions (only a couple are confusing to me, maybe with a little more studying I can understand the point being made). Photos are of in-service vehicles (mainly at parades or open house displays), restored vehicles, vehicles in museums and, in a couple of photos, vehicles in action.

The text is easy to read and understandable. The points put forth by the author are supported by the photos and where he makes a conjecture, he explains why. There is a lot of information in this book that is very useful to anyone trying to model an M50 or M51. As an example, if you were planning on building an early M50 based on an M4A4 hull, the rear decks must be modified from a standard A4. All A4s were converted back to radial engine vehicles and the decks were modified to look similar to an M4 or M4A1 deck.

Israel also used M32 recovery vehicles almost without any mods. There are some very good interior views of the museum example which will help anyone building one (especially since you have to change to hull on the *Italeri* kit, but that's another story).

The section on "Where are they now?" is interesting in that it discusses and has photos of M51s and M50s being used by Chile. What is really interesting is the statement by the author that Israelis visiting Chile stated that the stories of M51 being able to easily handle the T-62 in the Golan Heights in 1973 was exaggerated. This seems to be supported by Chile in that the M50s supplied by Israel mount an 60mm high velocity weapon and Chile is keeping these in service while replacing the M51.

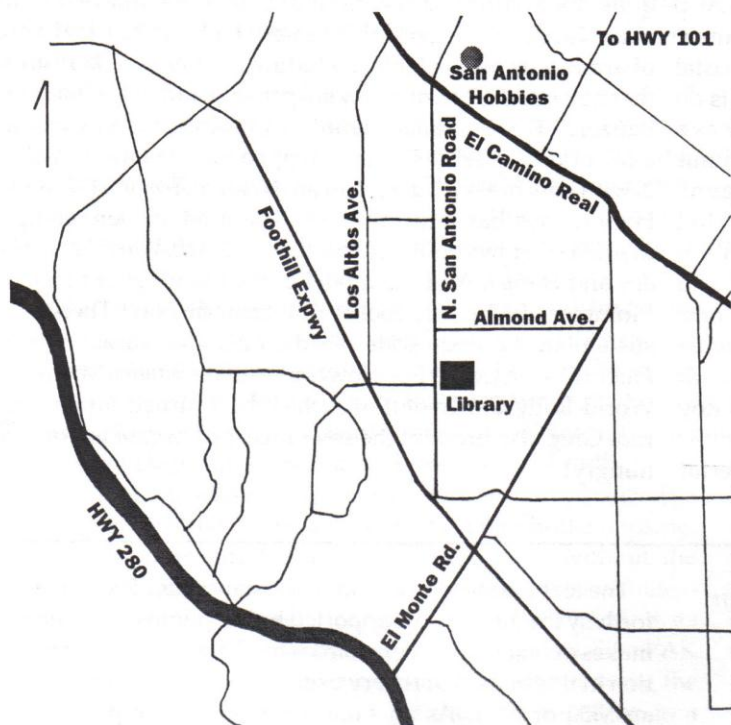
This book is not an operational history book, but a book about how a vehicle developed in Israeli service. Though the book is not intended to be specifically for modelers, the author is definitely a modeler himself. He makes points about various manufactures of kits and where they are right or wrong.

The airplane guys might also be interested in the version that mounts a jury-rigged *Shrike* missile launcher for SAM suppression. No, I'm not kidding!

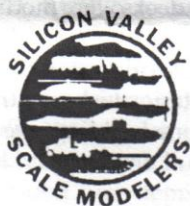
This is a must have book for anyone who plans to build an Israeli Sherman or someone interested in the history of the Sherman. So put aside the money for a couple of kits (or even one with some of the new prices for *Tamiya* kits) and spend it on this book. You will not be disappointed.

—Eric McClure

Hey! We're back on the peninsula!



Next meeting:
7:30 p.m.,
Friday,
September 21
at the Los Altos
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13 S. San Antonio Rd.
For more information, call the
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Don't forget: If your renewal date is red, it's time to pay your dues!