



SCALE-MAIL

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NEXT MEETING

General get together with nothing planned. Bring along your Avengers and any other projects.

Tuesday 16th August- 7.30pm
Leys Institute (upstairs)
20 Saint Marys Road, Ponsonby

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- Chairman
Martin Short
- Treasurer
Kevin Benson

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THE CHAIRMAN'S BIT

I don't know about you guys - the more pressing something becomes, the more 'things' seem to get in the way - all of life's little complications that crop up when you least want them to! I am of course talking about my Avenger build. The deadline is looming fast; too fast to be comfortable.

Now that I have finally figured out what version I want to build, I have cut plastic and even painted some bits, but progress is excruciatingly slow; partly real life getting in the way; partly IPMS or AMS. No matter how hard I try to build something 'out of the box', I just can't, I have to meddle or do something other than what the manufacturer intended. I should have stuck to a 1/72 scale version!

Other struggling members can always take up Peter Harrison's offer below -that way we may see quite a few Avengers in October.

Then, there is the kit underway for the Africa theme for the December meet, and I'm currently at a bit of an impasse, but hopefully only temporary. This time it's more due to kit limitations rather than any other excuse, whilst I ponder on how to deal with some moulding issues.

You may or may not have heard of 'Frogs for February', if nothing else a great title for a group build, initiated by Peter Harrison and Dimitri Berdebes if I'm not mistaken. The aim is to build an old Frog kit and bring the result along to the February meeting - a bit of classic modelling, and something you don't have to get too flash with, unless you want to - a good way to beat AMS methinks. Anyway, it has tickled my fancy, so I'm in, having a reasonable stash of ancient Froggies to build. Now, I just have to make the choice of which one; probably the hardest part of the build!

Unfortunately I can't get to this meeting, having to be somewhere else in the world, so to all those members making the foray South to the Scale Models Expo/IPMS Nationals in Wellington, best wishes and good luck. Look forward to seeing some good placings.

Have a great Tuesday night, catch up in September.

Cheers

Martin

FROM THE EDITOR

By the time you get this we will be just under a week out from another IPMS Nationals and Scale Models Expo in Wellington. Brett Sharman and myself will be doing the road trip down for an extended weekend and catching up with some old faces and meeting some new. Will be good to finally get to meet Brett Green of Hyperscale fame in person. Promises to be another good show from the Wellington team.

Due to Martin's extended sojourn,

we will have a reasonably informal get together again this month so bring along your latest and greatest (especially if you have made any Avenger progress or have something to take down for the Nationals/Expo).

Look for plenty of photo coverage from the competition in the next newsletter.

See you at the meeting,

Craig

NOTICES



UPCOMING EVENTS

2011 IPMS Nationals and Scale Models Expo
20 - 21 August 2011
Lower Hutt

Where: Horticultural Hall, Lower Hutt
Entries: 9am - 11am Saturday 20 August.

No entry fee for models. All entrants in the competition shall receive a free pass to the venue for the duration of the event.

Prize giving will be 4pm Sunday. Competitors must be present to accept any awards or prizes. Awards will be made for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Highly Commended in each of the categories along with overall best in Class.

To be eligible for "Best NZ Subject" the model must be entered in the appropriate NZ section. The only exceptions to this will be NZ subjects in Diorama, Ships Sci Fi/

Miscellaneous and Junior classes.

Models will be judged by Scale Models Wellington IPMS appointed judges. Entries shall be judged according to Scale Models Wellington IPMS judging criteria.

If you have any queries email scalemodelswellingtonnz@yahoo.co.nz



BEST AIRCRAFT - 2011
US IPMS NATIONALS

1/32 WingNut Wings DH-9A



MOTIVATION SESSION

Bring your "A" Game to Peter H's Place

That's your "Avenger" Game!

Who says modelling needs to be a lone cave-man pursuit!
Come around to my place on Sunday 4 September from 11am onwards and do some progress work on your Grumman Avenger model and enjoy the company of some like minded IPMS Auckland club members.

Haven't started yet? Don't worry neither have I! The deadline for the club BSK is October's meeting, so if you need a kick-start or some motivation here's your chance. All you need is your kit, some tools and enthusiasm. If you forget something essential I'll probably have it and you can use it. Just don't ask me for any AMS.

Email me at gepete@xtra.co.nz. Ring me on 021 387 626 or 09 818 6427 to

let me know if you are coming and I'll give you address details.

BUILD THE SAME PLANE CONTEST

"Build The Same Plane" contest kicks off in March and runs until October club night. Build any scale Grumman Avenger you want to and build it how you want to; out of the box; highly modified; excessively detailed; warbird; combat veteran - the choice is yours.

There is no shortage of markings options as the aircraft was flown in many versions, by the following countries:

Brazil

Canada

France

Japan

Netherlands

New Zealand

UK

US

Uruguay

Available kits:

1/32 Trumpeter

1/48 Accurate Miniatures, Hobby Boss, Italeri (AM kit reboxed)

1/72 Academy, Airfix, Hasegawa

Bring your Avenger along as you progress so everyone can see how you are going.



February Frog

By Dimitri Berdebes



An invitation to have some fun

During various build sessions over the year Peter Harrison, Peter Foxly and my self were thinking of doing a Frog tribute build and display for the club. This has now morphed into an invitation to all you modellers out there to join in and share the fun. The Frog company has been defunct


for a while now but their tools live on under various names like Novo, Cooperativa, MPM, Eastern Express and a few others.

Their range of kits is legendary and to some extent was the cause of their downfall. Theirs is the only 1/72 Avro Shackleton (that I know of), haven't seen a Bristol 138, or a Westland Wallace kitted by any other company plus many more

interesting subjects.

So if you've got any of these kits lurking around in the stash unbuilt, or a long forgotten work in progress now is the time to have a go at completing it.

Completion date will be club night in February 2012, so get modelling and have some fun.

Good luck, Dimitri Berdebes. 



Some of my stash

BUILD

Milicast 1/76 Churchill AVRE

By Martin Short



CHURCHILL AVRE

And now for something completely different...

I have a penchant for small scale AFV's, a hangover from my wargaming days, abandoned at the age of 15 as some of life other distractions gained my interest! Some listings of 'Milicast' kits on TradeMe were brought to my attention by Mark Davies, being sold it turns out by a person whom I 'knew' from the AudioeNZ group. NZ is a small world for sure. Price was good so I snaffled a few samples, and was particularly taken with the Churchill IV based AVRE. I hadn't

heard of Milicast until this point, and though they are simple kits geared towards the war gamer, the level of detail is very good. The bits: a part count of nine!

The moulding is very nice, and the parts cleaned up quickly – all were washed then assembled, inside an hour. And so, on to the painting. I don't have many references for armour, and so a quick scout on the net brought up a few photo's, all black and white of course, and a few builds of 1/35 kits, but all Churchill II based. I decided to paint mine as an AVRE of the first assault brigade, of

the 79th Armoured division 1944.

The kit doesn't contain any markings, so these were conjured up on the ALPS printer, duly applied, and the whole lot finally given a matt coat or two of Estapol. It is now crying out for some crew figures, which I will have to sort out in due course, but all in all a pleasant diversion. Painting armour is a bit of a lottery for me, but don't think this one turned out too bad, especially for something only 8cm long.

SM



BUILD

Airfix 1/72 Spitfire PRXIX

By Martin Short



If you are like me and grew up on a diet of Airfix kits (and Lincoln), the recent resurgence of the brand under Hornby's ownership has been something of a pleasant revelation. At last some of the old chestnuts are being dropped or updated, and some new kits released. Sure, the tooling (panel lines) and basic level of detail has been criticised by some, and the odd accuracy issue aside, I have enjoyed building their latest offerings which are 'aimed' towards the younger modeller. Plain and simple, I like Airfix kits for the same reason I like chocolate. Fixing some of the quirks (or not) provides a little more of a challenge over the shake n bakes. Though I have a few on the go, so far only the MiG-15 had passed the finishing post, so which now makes two new builds for 2011 completed!

I love Spitfires, and the MkXIV and PRXIX to me are the epitome of grace, and the prettiest of all the Griffon engine versions, so when this kit was released, hot footing into Newmarket was natural reflex action. There are plenty of reviews of this kit on the 'net, so for the gory details I will refer you there. For me, it is the easiest to build version of the PRXIX as the only other 1/72 options are the over-complex Fujimi kit, the old MPM kit, or nice-but-lots-of-work Ventura kit; the latter two of which are out of production.

There are now a few aftermarket corrections and upgrades available for this kit, but for this one when I started it, straight out of the Airfix oven, these were not available, and I wanted this pretty much OOB anyway.

Though the kit marking options are nice, I wanted to model PS852 of 81 Squadron based in Hong Kong - the PRXIX Ted Powles flew on his epic flight on February 2 1952, where he flew this PRXIX to 51,500 feet, the highest altitude ever reached by a Spitfire. In the subsequent dive from this height after the cockpit pressurisation warning went off, and strong risk of the 'bends' developing, hit a post-flight calculated 690mph (mach 0.94) during the dive, the highest speed ever attained by a propeller driven aircraft.

Though I did say OOB above, I did a few basic mods to the kit, to improve things or add in the necessary details to model PS852. First thing was to add in the missing wheel well detail using a half section of plastic tube for the leg bays, and then a sausage of Milliput around the wheel well proper as the wings are assembled, with the excess trimmed off before it cured. Though the undercarriage legs and door are moulded integrally, a quick score down the legs with the back of a knife makes them look acceptable. The air intake on

top of the cowl was replaced by a section of tubing, after damaging the moulding during seam work, and looks much better in hindsight, and the heater outlet was added to the dorsal spine aft of the cockpit to complete the mods.

I used an instrument panel decal from the spares box, and took the liberty of painting the cockpit black (with the rudimentary side wall detail dry brushed to highlight) sticking to the theory that this airframe was refurbished before going East, as later three spoke wheels were fitted also. Foil belts were added to the kit seat, and to be honest, this is about all you can see through the clear but thick canopy. The kit exhausts are a bit anaemic, but after a session with a 0.45 drill, looked passable enough.

This airframe was finished in silver, and took me 5 or so attempts to get an appearance I was satisfied with, having tried various Humbrol and Xtracolour, but were all too grainy. In the end I had to sacrifice a few millilitres of Modelmaster Metalliser Aluminium from my scarce stocks to get the right look. The upside of all this painting and repainting is that it has muted the heavy panel lines somewhat, though the finish is very fragile and there are a couple of marks that I dare not try and repair for risk of damaging it further. PS852 also carried larger than standard roundels, something that seems to

be peculiar to the eastern based PRXIX's, so an Xtradecal sheet came to the rescue there, and serials courtesy of the inkjet. Last but not least, the spine whip aerial was added, which is mounted forward on late PRXIX's.



SPITFIRE PRXIX

REVIEW

Azur serie FrRom 1/72 Vickers Vildebeest Mk.III

By Mark Davies



First Look

I first became aware of the Vildebeest as a 10-year old reading Airfix Magazine in the early 1960's. I remember being both repelled and deeply intrigued by its lumbering flying-brick looks and "crudely" exposed engine (As it happens 1930's French aircraft hold a similar sick fascination for me). Several therapies have failed to cure me from being drawn to subjects that make others avert their eyes and retch. So I for one am thrilled that Azur, under their serie FrRom, have released an injected multi-media kit of the Vildebeest. I apologise if this enthusiasm led to an over-lengthy preamble.

Background

The Vildebeest had a somewhat protracted development. It was Vickers response to specification 24/25 for a land-based coastal defence aircraft capable of carrying bombs or a torpedo. The winning design would replace the Hawker Horsely that had been fulfilling this role.



Spanish Vildebeest floatplane at San Janier. (Spanish Aeronaval official photo.)

Vickers' 24/25 proposal was favourably received. The Vildebeest's Afrikaans name was suggested by Vickers' South African consultant, the official convention at the time being to name this type of aircraft after a mammal beginning with "V" for Vickers. I've always thought naming rather ungainly looking aeroplane after rather ungainly looking animal really was most appropriate. However there were all manner of misspellings in even official documents, including

Vldebeeste in RNZAF service.

The Vildebeest's specified radial engine was the Bristol Jupiter VI, which was to be followed by the Bristol Orion. But the Orion did not materialise, and instead a Jupiter VIII was installed in the prototype. This

first flew in April 1928. The Jupiter VIII had continual over-heating problems, and a further change to a Jupiter XF gave no improvement.

Re-engined with a Jupiter XIF which was enclosed with a Townend ring, the Vildebeest prototype was displayed at the 1930 Paris Aero Show. It was here that the Spanish showed strong interest in the type. Meanwhile a second prototype, although intended to have a Jupiter XIF, was fitted with an Armstrong-Siddely Panther IIA. It was planned to use this second prototype for demonstrations to potential export customers in addition to Spain. These included Argentina, Romania, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Switzerland who had also shown interest.

At one point a Hispano-Suiza 12Lbr in-line engine was fitted at the suggestion of the Spanish (which as in my opinion improved the aeroplane's appearance). After watching trials of this aircraft in floatplane-form Spain obtained a licence to build 25 Hispano-Suiza powered versions. The CASA-built Spanish aircraft were

known as Type 245 Vildebeests. The in-line-engined prototype then went on a tour of Baltic States. But like previous overseas expressions of interest it seems little resulted from this trip. After returning to England the aircraft was sold to Spain.

The Vildebeest was fitted with yet another version of the Jupiter engine, the XFBM, which used mineral rather than vegetable oils. This engine resolved the over-heating problems. It was trialed in this form by the RAF and favourably received by all who flew it. A production order for nine aircraft under a re-written specification 22/31 was issued in October 1931. A development of the Jupiter XFBM engine was to be used in the production aircraft, and became the well-known and very successful Bristol Pegasus.

Vildebeest Mk I's entered service with No 100 Sqn, and would later fly the 6,500 miles to Singapore. In December 1933 the Vildebeest MK II powered by the Pegasus IIM₃ of 645 hp was ordered into production. Various detail improvements were made; including the adoption of a square cut fin. One Mk II had floats added for a possible Latvian order, but this seems to have amounted to nothing, and the aircraft was converted back to a wheeled undercarriage.

After 30 Mk II's had been built

Vickers was requested to develop a three-seat version to specification 15/34. As torpedo-dropping techniques developed the RAF came to consider that a third crewmember was needed. The resulting aircraft was the Vildebeest Mk III. In 1935 New Zealand ordered 12 Mk III's and further 15 later on. The Kiwi Vildebeestes (sic) had folding wings. Maybe RNZAF hangars were too narrow for the Vildebeest's 49-foot span at that time?

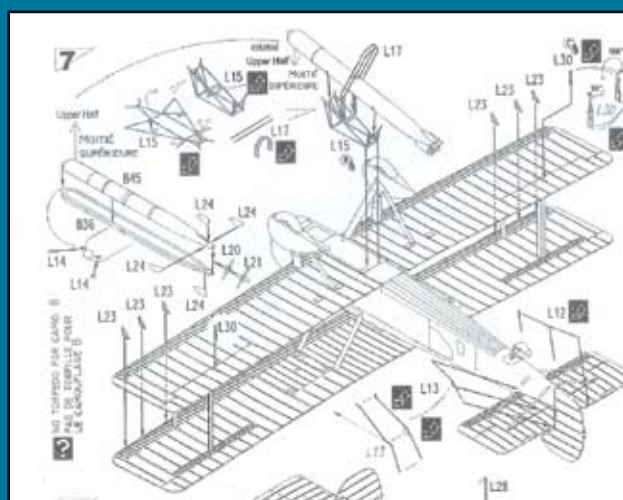
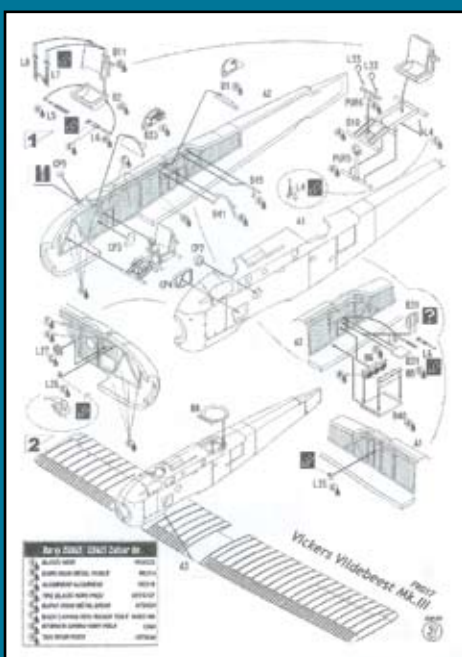
There was still yet another engine change in the Vildebeest story. A cowled 845 hp Bristol Perseus sleeve-valve radial was fitted to what became the MK IV. The MK III's third crewman's cockpit was faired over as the Mk IV reverted to a twin-seat configuration. Its performance was enhanced significantly by the Perseus, and 18 or so were manufactured or converted from MK III's. I have read that the Perseus engine was ill-suited to hot climates and that all Mk IV's served in the UK. However I have also see a photo of a Mk IV in RNZAF service, and interestingly this has a fuel tank under the fuselage like a Vincent would have.

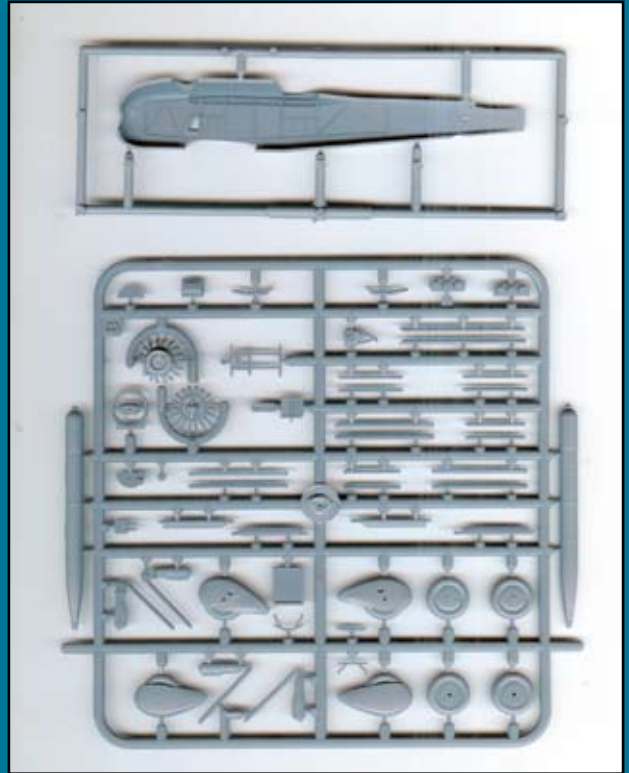
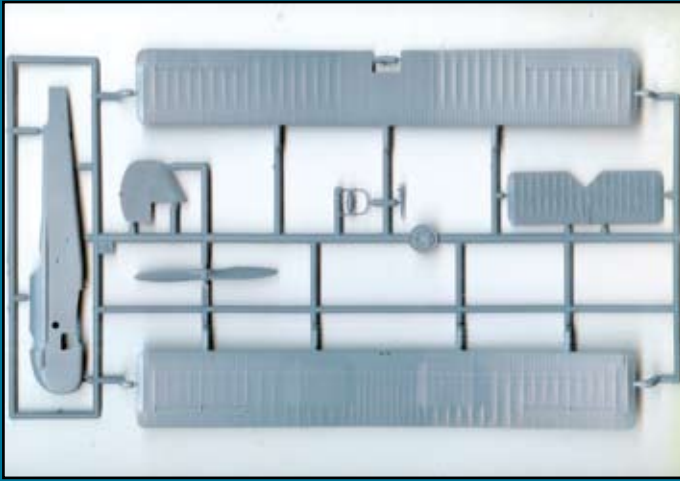
Three Mk I's were modified to evaluate the type's potential in other roles. These were a 3-seat Torpedo/Spotter/Reconnaissance (TSR), General Purpose Aircraft (see below) and a night bomber. Then in 1930

a MK II was converted to meet the Torpedo/Spotter/Reconnaissance (TSR) specification M1/30, to replace the Blackburn Rippon. As it happens the famous Fairey Swordfish went on to fulfil the TSR role.

In 1932 a MK I was sent on tour of the Middle East, the Sudan and East Africa. The purpose was to trial the Vildebeest as a General Purpose Aircraft to replace the Fairey III F and Westland Wapiti. The Vildebeest was successful, but it was considered that a different name was needed for reflect the new role, as the torpedo gear was to be replaced by a large external fuel tank and Army cooperation gear was to be fitted. This included message hook, ground equipment, extra ground radio and emergency rations etc. The name Vincent was adopted in honour of Admiral Rodney's victory at Cape St. Vincent over the Spanish in 1780. Production and Vildebeest conversions led to 197 Vincents being produced.

At the beginning WW2 Vildebeests were the only torpedo bombers in Coastal Command. They were also to face the Japanese attacks on Malaya and Singapore. They helped destroy several Japanese ships and opposed Japanese amphibious landings. But despite brave resistance the Japanese annihilated the Vildebeests and their crews. Two briefly fought on in Java before





they too were destroyed. Vincents enjoyed a somewhat less hazardous time bombing Italian forces in North Africa, and in also undertook operations in Iraq.

Previous 1/72 Scale Vildebeest Kits

I'm aware of at least two previous brands of 1/72 Vildebeest kits. One was from long ago by Contrail with the option to build a Vincent (they offered a 1/48 kit too). The other much more recent releases have been resin kits of the Mk's I to IV and CASA Type 245 by Kiwi Resins, and predictably they offer a Vincent too. The Contrail kits still appear on auction sites, but you'd have to be keen to take that path to satisfy a Vildebeest

craving. The Kiwi Resin kit received a good review in SAMI January 2007 which said "...a challenging but very rewarding kit to build. Not quite state of the art, it's nevertheless very well cast with great detail, and while preparation and finishing is time consuming, the resulting model is a delight."

Azur serie FrRom Branding

Before proceeding I should explain that Azur serie FrRom is a niche line of kits under the umbrella of the Azur label. FrRom stands for France & Romania, and refers to the types of subjects originally envisaged for this series; although it has quickly expanded beyond subjects from these two nations. The now

wider choice of subjects selected for production will remain ones that appeal to the people behind serie FrRom, and are unlikely to be produced by bigger players. They aim to provide good quality limited run kits at more affordable prices than the resin brand alternatives we would otherwise expect to kit such subjects.

One thing I have noticed is that various on-line shops list Azur serie FrRom either under Azur, or separately as FrRom or FrRom-Azur. Also Azur stockists do not necessarily carry Azur serie FrRom (e.g. MPM's own CMK E-shop). So if you are looking to buy check out all combinations of the brand name.





Frankly I think it's somewhat awkward and confusing branding. The original French-Romanian linkage has quickly become diluted, and it's a real "mouthful" to say let alone type repeatedly in a review! Therefore for ease of reading I shall from here on use Azur* to refer to "Azur serie FrRom".

The Kit

It is pleasing that the kit comes in a top-opening box rather than the more typical of Azur* end-opening type. The kit parts are sealed in three plastic bags that serve to keep different media parts separate from each other. The instructions are in English and French. They have a brief type history, and provide a parts map plus diagrammatic assembly guide in A5 format. Colour call-outs are cross-referenced to FS 595B; Gunze Sangyo and I think Mr Color paint codes.

The styrene parts are cleanly moulded limited run items on three sprues. All parts are well moulded and to a standard typical of recent Azur* and Special Hobby releases. There is a hint of flash on most parts where the mould halves join, but this will be easily removed. The small clear sprue of five parts is likewise to a good standard.

The resin items provide an engine, oil cooler, fixed gun barrels (one

spare I think), two leading edge navigation lights, a control column and rudder bar. The PE fret provides no less than 36 detail parts, several of which dress up the cockpit. There are also tailplane struts, leading edge slat hinges and control linkages. The remainder is mainly torpedo-related; being fins, screws and the rather elaborate looking sling and mounting set up.

Taking a look at the main parts I was struck by how the wings are particularly nicely tooled with a realistic taught fabric effect. They also capture the variations in surface levels around the fuel tanks and the way the aileron's section tapers where the hinge on the rear spars. The leading edge slats are moulded shut with the upper wing. I think this is acceptable because photos show them frequently closed on the ground as well as deployed. To cater for deployed slats more PE and resin parts would have been needed, and no doubt have added to cost.

The fuselage has restrained recessed surface detail, and correctly has the side and bottom fabric covering very taught and smooth. The inside of the fuselage halves features the metal frame structure for the length of the cockpit and beyond. The cockpit interior itself is very well catered for through a combination a styrene, resin and PE parts. These include

more tubular structure, instrument panel, pilot's controls including throttle and trim wheel, seat belts and obviously seats, the rear gun, its mount and spare ammo drums. The kit also provides the several clear small porthole windows and a windscreen.

The Mk III was the most produced version and introduced a third crewmember. However in the kit the middle crewmember's seat and cockpit paraphernalia is not provided, as the sliding hatch in the decking over his position is moulded shut. This is a pity as many photos of MK III's show this hatch open in service use. I can only think that this is tooling and cost compromise because other versions of Vildebeest have only two crew positions. It should not be too hard to open with some scratch-building if desired.

There is a choice of spatted or exposed wheels to cater for different decals options provided with the kit. The spats are moulded with their wheels, which is not an unusual compromise in this scale, and should look okay.

The torpedo which is applicable to three of the four kit decals option has two styrene halves, for PE fins and two PE screws. It mounts to the fuselage underside on an elaborate and very fine PE framework, which,

like the real thing, establishes the correct angle for the torpedo to enter the water upon release. There are also a couple of PE slings to retain the torpedo in place. I'm sure this will for most builders be amongst the last items to be fitted, unlike the instructions suggest. I have struggled to find a good image of the real release gear, and so cannot comment on the suitability of PE to represent it in scale terms, as I don't know if it was flat like the PE or more rounded in section.

The angled carriage of the torpedo adds a lot of interest to the aircraft's appearance, and will no doubt be a popular payload choice with modellers. However it's unfortunate that bomb-racks & bombs were not included as these were carried too.

I would expect this kit to build well in a fashion typical of late Azur* or Special Hobby kits. As 1/72 biplanes go this one has a couple of constructional advantages; it is reasonably large, has only one pair of inter-plane struts per wing and there's no wing stagger. The strut mounting holes are there, but a bit difficult to see. They may need to be enlarged a little. The instructions direct the modeller to drill holes for the aileron linkages and provide dimensional locations for these. I can only think that the tooling for their holes was overlooked.

There is a choice indicated in the instructions regarding the tailplane, dependent on the decal option selected. I had to study this point several times before I realised what the choice was. It concerns the

rear-most pair of tailplane PE bracing struts. There is a tiny difference in length, barely 1mm, so all I'd say is keep this point in mind and don't get the three pairs of struts mixed up.

The resin engine is nicely done; as it needs to be with this subject since it is fully exposed. The inlet and exhaust manifolds are styrene as are the long exhaust pipes. The only major flash on the kit was on part of the exhaust manifold, but this does not present any real difficulties. There is also a resin oil cooler.

The power plant is finished off with a large two-blade styrene propeller. Propellers, especially those in limited-run kits, can be a pet-hate of mine. This kit's is better than many, but somehow to my eye it's still too slab-like and lacking the subtle changes of curvature apparent across the face of the blades. It may look better when painted, but could perhaps benefit from some re-shaping.

The kit has numerous very small and carefully addressed PE details, these include little aileron mass balances (at least that's what I think they are), aileron actuators, boarding step, gun ring elevation arms and so. All are details that add to this character of the resultant model, and suggest a good deal of research has gone into this kit.

Four attractive decal options are provided:

- An overall aluminium machine

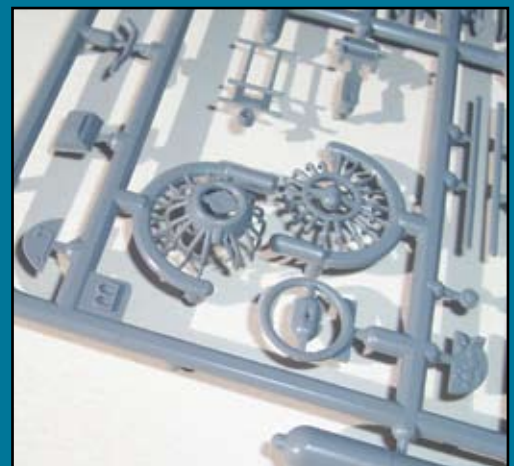
based in Singapore in 1936 of 36 Sqn RAF. It has attractive red spat flashes and a large letter B in a black-outlined red square on the upper wing. An errata decal is provided separately because the square printed on the main decal sheet is too large.

- Another overall aluminium machine is of the RNZAF's Flying Training School with blue fuselage bars and spat flashes.

- Two camouflaged machines, both based in Singapore in 1941 belonging to 36 and 100 Sqns. Each has a very interesting camouflage scheme of Mediterranean Blue & Extra Dark Sea Green Upper wing, tail and fuselage, with Light Mediterranean Blue & Dark Sea Green lower wing. Under-surfaces are Sky Blue. Since first reviewing this kit for Hyperscale information has come to light that suggests these camouflage colours could be incorrect (I think that they were based on "SAM Combat Colours #4, Pearl Harbour & Beyond"). There has been lengthy discussion on britmodeller.com regarding this and other matters Vildebeest.

The decals also provide the prominent footprint silhouettes applied to the lower wing to guide ground crew where to walk along the spars, plus quite a number of stencils. The instructions provided a separate page of diagrams dedicated to placement of these decals. The decal sheet appears to be of very good quality.

Other Versions?



Azur* have also announced a Mk IV kit in addition to the Vildebeest Mk III reviewed here. A Vincent kit from them would not be a surprise either. Alternatively, since the kit is produced by the MPM-Group, Special Hobby might offer a Vincent as they have shared moulds with Azur previously. As to Mk's I & II or Type 245, well I guess they remain slim possibilities.

Conclusion

I feel that this kit scores good marks in terms of research and execution. It has nice levels of detail, sensible kit design and use of different media, plus attractive colour schemes.

However I think that enclosing the centre crewmember's station is a pity, and might reflect some penny pinching on the MK III's tooling. This said it shouldn't be too hard to cut it open and dress up the rather small cockpit that will be revealed. Likewise the absence of bombs and their racks is a little disappointing

The moulding and surface detail is

very nicely done, and the centre crew station aside, cockpit detail is more than adequate for the scale and the size openings it is to be viewed through.

Some care will be needed in assembly, not only because it's a biplane, but also because there are quite a number of fiddly and delicate PE parts. Also the instructions require

a good quality injection moulded multi-media kit of this type is very welcome (I've waited 40 years for one!). Almost perversely, AZ Models has also announced a 1/72 injected kit of the Vildebeest Mk III - go figure!

Having kitted the Vildebeest Mk's III & IV, and with a follow-on Vincent likely, I am hoping that Azur* may

consider offering the Type 245 Vildebeest with the Hispano-Suiza V-12 engine. This really would make for a distinctly different looking version. It seems to me that a resin replacement nose and external radiators would do the trick, but then life is rarely that simple! (And by the way, the Type 245 on floats is even more impressive - In for a penny in for a pound...)

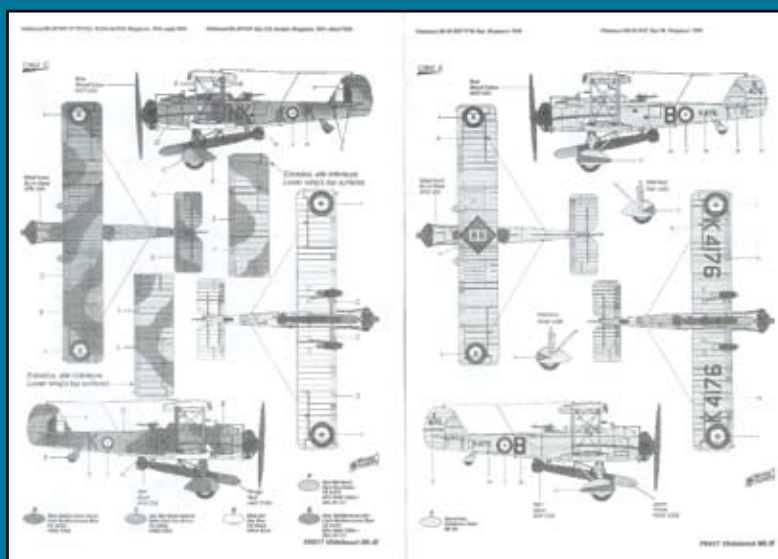
It should come as no surprise that I am recommending this kit very highly.

Thanks to Azur serie FrRom for the review sample.



careful study just to determine where some things go and what choices are being identified.

The Vildebeest was a significant aircraft to serve the inter-war RAF, and unfortunately for the crews concerned, it was still around to face the Japanese onslaught too. So



Vildebeest

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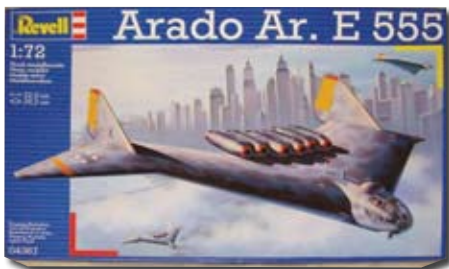
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