

**JUNE
2004**



Our First Group Build: By Trevor McTavish

April 1 marked the 80th Anniversary of the formation of the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the closing of the RMMC's first ever group build. Envisioned as an excuse to dust off those RCAF, RCN and CAF models we have sitting in our collections, several club members were able to participate.

Because the 'group build' philosophy was started on another modeling website, aircraftresourcecenter.com, we opened ours to modelers around the world. As the organizer, it was nice to see modelers from across Canada, and throughout the United States build and share their models. All told, we had 18 Group Build entries and another 73 Canadian models that had been built previously.

I feel that our Group Build was a success and with the membership's input I'll organize another for next year.

On April 3, the club held its monthly meeting at the Aerospace Museum, in one of their side meeting rooms. Because of the organizational work of Tom Calbury, we were able to display our modeling activities, the RMMC and a selection of models to

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museum visitors. As this year's first 'public outing' I felt it was a success. Sixteen members showed up and worked on their models, toured the museum and had a good time.

A bonus was when SHAW television's cameraman arrived and proceeded to interview a number of club members. He also filmed our models and watched us work on our projects. The clips were then played the following Monday from noon until midnight.

This marks the fifth or sixth time the RMMC has been a television star. A big thank you must be given to Massimo Santarossa, because it was his media blitz that brought this to fruition.

Www.RockyMountainModelClub.com



Tamiya s Me-262 A2 Swallow

By Trevor McTavish

Overall this kit says “quality.” Upon opening the sturdy box one is greeted by numerous trees of medium grey sprue, individually wrapped in clear plastic bags, preventing damage. Every piece is nicely molded with crisp details and easy assembly. A prime example of Tamiya’s engineering was the metal nose weight, molded to create the wheel well for the forward landing gear. This was something I first saw in Eduard’s P-39 two years ago and it’s nice to see manufacturers take this into account when making new kits.

Construction:

As I began assembly I noticed the level of detail to the interior components. I’ve built numerous Tamiya kits (Lancaster, P-51D, Wildcat, Mosquito, Spitfire) and I’m pleased to see that Tamiya has included a very detailed cockpit, more attune with the Mosquito than the P-51. The cockpit and forward fuselage interior were built as separate assemblies, just like the instructions suggest. When the major components were glued and dried, I brushed the nose compartment with Testor’s Chrome Silver while the cockpit was done with Polly Scale acrylic’s Grimy Black (a railroad colour). Although the instructions are well drawn and easy to follow, they continue to only call out Tamiya’s paint codes. I don’t know about you, but I have no idea what XF-54 is, nor do I enjoy mixing paints to create a colour I can buy from another manufacturer. Details were brought out using a combination of thin washes and dry brushing before I applied the kit’s instrument panel decal.

When those two assemblies were finished, I super glued them into position against a fuselage half. Then the fuselage halves were joined using liquid glue. Here’s where Tamiya’s quality shows through. Because of the fabulous fit between components I didn’t need to apply excess glue or liquid putty, only a light sanding to remove what little ridge may have formed. Likewise the wings were given the same treatment.

If you pay any attention to the Internet newsgroups, the wings caused quite a stir. “Why no slats?” asked some, “Why no flaps?” asked others. The answer is simple – because Tamiya didn’t put them there. In my opinion, I don’t care. Although the Me 262’s slats were always open on the ground (because of the mechanism) I don’t mind not having them deployed. Likewise with the flaps, they’re just easier to break. Before proceeding further I test fit the wing, tails and engine subassemblies. I wanted to leave as much of this model apart until it had been painted. This would help me to mask items. It would also make the customary German squiggles easier to paint, especially on the engines and vertical stabilizer, where I might accidentally mess up the underside colour.

With all the major assemblies finished, I began preparing to paint. The canopy was masked and installed, the gun compartment doors were tacked into place with white glue and the wheel wells masked with tape and facial tissue.



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Painting and Decaling:

Remember how I said I don't enjoy mixing paints? Well, I had to rely on George S. to provide me with some English reference books, just so I could find the proper colours. This pesky task set me back the better part of eight months, simply because it frustrated me so much.

When I restarted the project, I airbrushed the whole topside in RLM 81. The undersides were painted RLM 76 and I used a paper mask along the fuselage, but held it quite far off the fuselage's surface to increase the feathered edge. When I was happy with the pattern, I began looking at painting all those squiggles. In the field, these were applied per the personal tastes of the painters (and paint availability) so I wasn't concerned with creating a perfect representation, rather a general feel for the aircraft's look. I should note that because the squiggles on the engine nacelles move onto part of the wing, I glued them into place before painting. I first enlarged the Tamiya supplied painting diagram to 1/48th scale, using a photocopier, then lightly drew the pattern onto the uppersurfaces. A thin line of RLM 82 was then airbrushed, tracing the pencil lines and completing the camouflage.

When the paint was dry and I was happy with the look I glued the sub-assemblies together, remembering to be careful of excess glue (and fingerprints). Then I airbrushed everything with a coat of Future floorwax. Since I don't have a massive stock of aftermarket decals for this subject (or anything German for that matter) I used the kit-supplied decals. Usually I have nothing but trouble with Tamiya's kit decals, but this time, I was in for a pleasant surprise - they worked! With the help of Gunze's Mr. Marksofter all of the markings and small stencils settled down into the details with little or no prodding. When all the decals had been applied, I airbrushed another coat of Future floorwax over the model, followed by Polly Scale's acrylic clear flat.

I weathered certain items with a light wash of acrylic brown and black paints (dipped in water and dish soap) and some ground chalk pastels. When everything was to a satisfactory appearance, I applied a second and final coat of clear flat. Now all that was left was to remove the paint masks on the windows, glue the landing gear and gun compartment door in place and my 262 was done.

Conclusions:

How was the build? I enjoyed it. The model is, as I mentioned before, very well engineered and requires only novice skills to assemble. What about the Kettenkraftrad? As part of my discounted purchase price, the half motorcycle, half treaded vehicle stayed in the hobby shop. From what others have said, it builds easily and looks nice, but since I don't build 1/48th scale German armour I didn't lose anything. If you're interested in the Me 262 and are willing to shell out the bucks, this is your kit.



Italeri s M109A6 Paladin

By Massimo Santarossa (photos by T.Calbury)



As many people in our model club know, I predominantly build aircraft. Whether that's good or bad I don't know, but it keeps me happy. However, I have been expanding my horizons to include other genres of modeling, including cars, heavy trucks, and armoured vehicles. Within each of these subject areas, including aircraft, I limit myself to certain areas of interest, as modelers tend to do. When it comes to armoured vehicles, my interest lies in modern Canadian AFVs. Up until now I have been building "practice" AFV kits, producing them straight out of the box with whatever markings

were included and not paying too much attention to how accurate a kit was when compared to the real thing. The idea was to develop and refine my armour building skills. So when I thought I was prepared, I broke out my Italeri kit and got ready to build an M109 of the Royal Canadian Artillery.



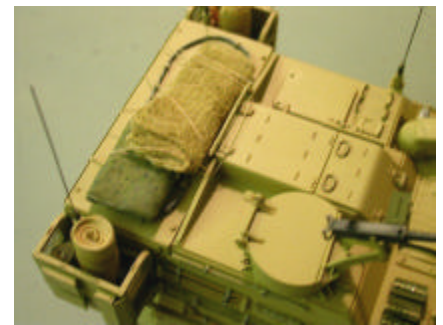
There was only one problem. The RCA does indeed operate the M109, but not the A6 version. The version in current use with the Canadian army is the M109A4! The two vehicles are distinctly different, especially the construction of the turret, making it impossible to pass off my kit for something Canadian. Needless to say I was a little disappointed, especially after I asked a friend who should have known better which version of the M109 we used. At this point stubbornness took precedent over national pride (there was no way I was going to go out and buy another AFV kit and detail set), so I decided to build an American M109 with markings from the box. I also used a set of Skybow tracks, some scratch built items, and an Eduard photo etch set that was

donated by a friend. This project was actually a straightforward build, with the kit going together easily, and PE parts being substituted when called for. I followed the kit instructions fairly closely, only jumping to build up other subassemblies (tracks, main gun, and so forth) when I knew that getting ahead of myself would not do any damage. This kit presented no fit issues of any sort that stick out in my mind and was pleasing to build. This does not mean that it was a fast build.



One of the other areas of construction that took up a good chunk of time was all the photo etch pieces that were installed. Eduard provides the details for this kit on three frets of metal, including at least two straps each for every bit of gear that is hung on the sides of the turret. That's a lot of straps to bend into shape and glue on. It all came together well in the end, though I chose not to detail the interior of the kit. There are some aftermarket detail sets available that will let you dress up the inside of Italeri's M109, but I'm not that advanced of an armour builder.

The vast majority of the time spent on this kit was directed towards the painting and weathering the unit. I painted the kit with Model Master US Army/Marines Gulf Armour Sand, and then applied a wash of burnt umber into the recesses. Some dry brushing with silver and gunmetal then followed to pick out the raised details. The tracks were painted black, weathered with gun metal on areas that would receive wear and rust on those that would not, and then dry brushed with light grey to show a bit of wear on the rubber parts. The final bit of weathering was accomplished with the use of colour chalk dust.



The scratchbuilding I did was limited to the stores that were placed on the back of the turret. I made the bed rolls and tarp from tissue paper, the netting from a piece of gauze, ration boxes from packing paper, and a length of rope from white tread that had been stained in some strong tea. The antennas are lengths of thin brass wire that mounted by heating one end and then letting the hot end make its own hole into the antenna mounts. I also replaced the kit's tow cable, replacing the cable itself with picture hanging wire but using the ends from the tow cable in the box.

As with the other Italeri AFV kits that I have made, this is not a difficult kit to build. It goes together well with a minimum fuss and renders a fine looking model when complete. As this is now my fourth armour kit, I have come to learn that building armour kits is not that hard in the grand scheme of thing (no offense to the pure AFV builders out there). Most of the techniques that I used to build airplanes are the same ones used to build tanks; clean up parts, don't leave gaps, use CA when working with PE or resin.



The two areas that I need to concentrate on is research, since I'm still relatively new to AFVs and am still learning the terminology, and weathering techniques for AFVs. I think maybe now at last I can build something Canadian and get it mostly right. Stay tuned.

Materials Used

Italeri M109A6 Paladin S.P. Howitzer (kit #372)

Eduard M109A6 Paladin Photo Etch (#35 319)

Skybow M108 and M109 Individual Link Tracks (#3502)

