

IPMS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY MEETING: Saturday, February 20th
Bellevue Public Library 1:00 PM TO 4:00 PM

WARNING:

Please, oh please note: the February Meeting is the **third** Saturday in the month, not the second as usual. This means you must turn up to the meeting on February 20th, not February 13th. This is meant for those of you not at last month's meeting, since if you attended last month, you have already been notified of the change.

As for the March meeting, it will be held on the normal date, the second Saturday of the month, March 13th. However, it will be at a different venue: the James G. Murphy Auction premises, in Kenmore. A map and driving directions will be available in the March newsletter. The reason for this change, and that of the February meeting date is due to the poor state of the public schools. You see, the Library has been taken over for most of

February, and ALL of March and April to help folk who just don't seem to get it once again: how tough it seems to be for so many to fill in an IRS form. I blame it all on the poor state of the public education system. Come on folks, how Ez do you expect the IRS to make them???

As for you VENDORS out there, please note we have total access for you at the March meeting, so please bring along your products for us all to view. Tables will be readily available.

LUFTWAFFE PROJECT

I hope all those who volunteered for duty on this project are well on the way to completing your model? Remember, your completed work is expected to show up at the March meeting, for everyone to see, prior to being placed on display at the Recon Show, April 10th.

CAN/AM-RECON VII CONTEST & SHOW

For those who haven't been paying attention lately, please note that this great event will take place at the Red Lion Hotel, SeaTac, on Saturday, April 10th 1993. Doors will open to the Public at 10:00 am for Contest entries, and entries will stop being taken at 2:00 pm.

Judging will occur between 3:00 and 4:30, and we have to be totally cleared out by 6:00 pm. At the February meeting I will have large numbers of fliers for the Event. It would be most appreciated if I could get a few volunteers to place these fliers at various area model stores so that we can try for a massive turnout for the Show. I am also still looking for volunteers to help on the day of the Show: Registration, Security, Judging and General Duty. We have a few good men (and women) but are still short a couple. PLEASE lend us your support for this event.

Please also note, all you Juniors, and members who know of Junior modelers: there is no charge for entry to the Recon Contest for those 15 years and under, up to five models. Do your best to encourage those in this category to enter.

DML 1/35th NATO MLRS Update

Those of you who read last month's newsletter will be aware of my preliminary review of this kit. I am now 70% through the job, and have one major announcement to make. If you are building the vehicle with the cab doors closed, as I did, don't bother doing anything special to the interior. In fact, you might as well paint the whole interior the same color, for you can't see a damned thing once the cab is complete. I made a great deal of carefully painting the whole interior, and then dry brushed it as well, only to be left with the Black Hole of Calcutta when looking in one of the cab door windows!!! It pays, I guess, to have some vision when perusing the hobby of modeling.

HEARD ANY GOOD RUMORS LATELY????

From the rumor mill comes: nothing much at all. Hasegawa will do at least a couple of their 48th scale Sea King copters, also a 48th Spitfire V, and Hasegawa/Fine Molds, a 35th scale Japanese WWII tank, or tankette as the case may be. No doubt at a hefty "Fine" price, given the cost of their 48th scale "Judy". DML to join Monogram with a 48th B-26, a "K".

Messerschmitt Bf109B

Hobbycraft 1/48

By Corbin Haldane

Even though Hobbycraft's 109 series has been out for several months now, I hope this will still be interesting and useful to some one.

The Bf109 kit contains 43 parts molded in light grey and clear. All parts are flash-free and have engraved panel lines. The fit was generally very good, but I did remove the locating pins on the fuselage half to get the panel lines to align better. I had heard that the panel lines didn't match up, but mine aligned perfectly.

I had to sand the outside of the cockpit tub to get it to fit into the fuselage correctly. I left part *A22 out of the cockpit because it made the seat too wide to fit into the tub assembly. There were absolutely no painting instructions for the interior or the wheel wells & landing gear. I painted these RLM 02 which seems to be standard for most WWII German aircraft. One pleasant surprise was that I didn't need any filler at all on the fuselage seam and only minor filling was necessary where the rear of the wing blends into the underside of the fuselage. The location of the air scoop (C4) isn't very clear, but the box art shows the correct location. Hollowing out the scoop with a knife makes a big improvement.

I had to use a piece of scrap plastic with a hole drilled in it to hold the spinner shaft (A14) onto the rear section of the spinner (A13) since the kit hole was way too big for the shaft. I suppose you could skip this little modification and just glue the spinner to the fuselage, but then the propeller wouldn't spin, and what fun is that? The spinner (C10) needed to be carved away from the back of the propeller blades since this was molded as one piece. I also sanded the rear of the spinner on a flat surface to get it to match up with the rear section of the spinner (A13).

The canopy is molded as one piece, so you'll have to do some cutting if you want to display it in the open position. My kit came with 2 canopies, but I don't know if they all do. I scribed 2 parallel lines on each side of the canopy to represent the overlap of the sliding panels. You'll need to open up the hole in the rear section of the canopy for the antenna, which is included, even though the instructions don't show it.

The locating holes on bottom of the horizontal stabilizers were too far inboard, which, if you used the support struts as provided, would result in a very steep dihedral which is not right at all for any 109. To correct this I simply glued on the stabilizers, making sure they were level. Then I cut off the locating pin on the end of the support strut. When the struts were glued in place, the flared end covered the holes on the underside of the stabilizers.

There were 2 ejector pin holes in each wheel which were easy enough to fill. I also sanded the back side of each wheel hub flat for a more correct appearance.

There is a locating hole in the bottom of the port wing for a Pitot tube, but none was included in the kit. It was an easy thing to scratch build by gluing 2 pieces of .025" rod into an "L" shape. I used the Pitot tube from a Hasegawa kit as a guide.

The most troublesome parts of this kit are the flaps. They are too thin, which lets them slide all the way inside the wing! I glued strips of scrap plastic into the wings and used these to glue the flaps onto since they didn't come into contact with anything else. I also had to glue wedges of plastic into the wings to spread them apart so they would match up with the wing roots on the fuselage.

The radiator scoop (C3) leaves small gaps where it blends into the fuselage sides. I used a piece of fine mesh nylon to simulate the radiator screen. It looks great when painted & dry-brushed.

The painting instructions are nicely done, using RLM codes. I painted mine as an airplane from JG132, Germany, 1937. The kit comes with decals for an example from Germany, 1937 and one from Legion Condor, Spain, 1938. The decals were nicely printed, but I had serious doubts about the opacity of the white as well as the accuracy. I decided to use the excellent 109B decals that come as extras in the Hasegawa 109E-3 kit (*J-1).

My model was painted with ExtraColor paint, which I can't recommend enough, and over-coated with Humbrol matt cote, which I also highly recommend.

All in all, I think this was a great kit and I can easily recommend it. I spent 13 1/2 hours on my 109B, which is only 1 hour more than my Hasegawa 109E. Even though it may sound like I had a lot of problems, there wasn't anything difficult to fix. The cockpit is virtually identical to the Hasegawa kits. The recessed panel lines and good fit are also note-worthy. And, best of all, the price certainly can't be beat!

CZECH RESIN NORTHROP N9M REVIEW
IPMS-SEATTLE NEWSLETTER

Being a longtime fan of the weird and wonderful in aviation, I have worked hard to overcome the modeller's traditional fear of kits produced in other than finely molded injected plastic. I have tried short-run kits, vacuforms, and the occasional plastic or resin conversion, but I have never actually begun a complete resin kit. When I found that a plane I had always wanted to model, Northrop's N9M flying wing, was available as a Czech resin kit, I decided to take the plunge.

First, a word about availability: they aren't, at least locally, so resign yourself to mail order. This has a serious disadvantage, in that you can't take a look at the kit prior to purchase. Still, we are lucky to have two dealers of resin kits on the west coast, both of whom seem willing to lend whatever help they can to allow you to make your choice. The two dealers are Lencraft and Aviation Usk, though Av Usk has by far the greater selection. They carry Czech, French, and British resins. Be aware that Av Usk is not known for speed, but their prices are reasonable and their personnel are friendly. "Reasonable" prices shouldn't be confused with cheap prices; all resins are expensive when compared to plastic kits. The N9M was \$18.00 plus tax and shipping.

So what does a resin kit consist of? The Northrop N9M came in a sealed plastic bag with a photocopied three-view drawing and no decals. The body of the aircraft is in one solid piece, and all the smaller pieces (landing gear, props, antennae) are encased in a thin wafer of resin. The canopy is a vacuform. There is a bit of minimal painting information on the drawing. Luckily, the N9M's paint scheme was fairly simple: overall silver, with national insignia and no other markings.

The panel lines are engraved and very well done, but the actual surface of the body is heavily marked with bumps and junk. I was concerned that this might pose a serious problem, but a few minutes spent sanding the surface with 400 grit paper -- and tons of water -- cleaned everything up and left the panel detail untouched. The resin is apparently relatively soft, though that didn't cause a problem anywhere in the process. There are a few pinholes, but none anywhere that couldn't be easily filled with putty and sanded smooth.

A couple of surface areas required additional attention. One aileron line on the undersurface needed to be rescribed, and the propellor pylons that extend aft of the wing need extensive cleanup (in fact, looking back at the end of the project, I wish I had spent more time working on this area). Nothing that can't be accomplished while listening to the radio.

Since the resin fuselage/wing is a solid casting, I immediately thought of two issues: how to handle the cockpit and where to

install enough weight to keep the nose down (the N9M has tricycle undercarriage). The cockpit is an open box in the upper surface of the wing, with no real detail, and a separate ingenious little hatch that fits over the top of the hole. This hatch is then faired into the fuselage body and the canopy is attached over the top. The kit supplies a seat, but mine was badly molded (the only part that was enough of a disaster to require replacement), so I dug out a Roberts Model plastic seat and added a pair of True Details generic US seatbelts. I used a stick that had begun life in the cockpit of an X-15, and took an instrument panel decal from the spares box and applied it to the front wall of the hatch cover piece. The canopy is large, and the view into the cockpit is relatively clear (though the canopy itself is not), so you may want to add additional detail.

Finding a spot for nose weight turned out not to be a problem, because the N9M had an extended tailwheel that kept the wing from nosing up while landing. With that wheel down, the plane actually has four wheels touching the ground. I'm not sure how to deal with the problem when dealing with a resin kit of a true nosewheeler. Maybe lay in a supply of clear plastic tailstands.

The landing gear are usable, if not outstanding, though I did use different mainwheels. The landing gear doors are thin and strong. Some cutting is required since they are each one-piece moldings. The canopy, while fairly clear, does not have much detail, so it is not easy to know where to cut. Fitting a vacuform canopy is always a nailbiting operation, and constant dryfitting against the fuselage is a must.

Time out for a word on superglue. I hate it. Am I the only one who finds that the only things it sticks together quickly and firmly are fingers? But if you want to do a resin kit, you're stuck with dealing with cyanoacetate adhesive. My advice is to use one of the superglue gels (such as Zap A Gap); at least they are thicker and not prone to run all over the place. One alternative is two-part epoxy, though I have never tried it and can't comment on whether it would be more effective.

There are locating holes for the landing gear, though you may want to drill them out. The truly industrious could add detail to the engine intakes and the wheel wells (including retraction jacks), but since I've never been accused of being industrious I left them as supplied.

A coat of grey primer (I usually use Testors FS16440 in a spray can due to ease of application and relatively quick drying) revealed the usual minor problems. Though I normally use Xtracolour paints, I've always had good luck with Testors non-buffing aluminum for painted silver finishes, and I used that for the N9M. One coat, over the primer, is usually sufficient to cover.

One operation, after the major construction was complete, gave me fits. There is a small antenna wire that runs from each mid-wing to a ventral post located just aft of the cockpit. Stretched sprue -- or in my case .10 plastic rod from the UK -- can be anchored to the wings and then drawn tight at the post. Unfortunately the superglue absolutely refused to hold the rod against the central post. After a long period of frustration, I eventually gave up and left the wire off.

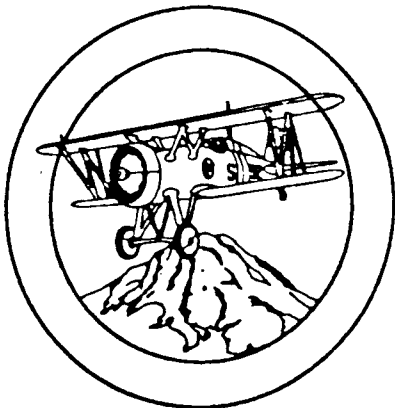
As mentioned above, almost no markings were carried on the N9M flying wing. Early in its career, it carried the early white star in a blue circle in four positions. Later, it carried standard WW2 stars and bars (no red stripe) on the upper left and lower right wing. Both can come from the decal bank or (as in my case) a Scale-Master sheet of US insignia. If there was any stencilling, the three-view drawing doesn't show it, and unless it was generic and could be swiped from other kits I don't know where it would come from anyway.

The N9M was built as a small-scale proof-of-concept for what eventually became the B-35 and B-49. Flying wings have not been given their due by the major kitmakers (maybe if the Testors B-2 sold well it will get them thinking in that direction), and the only other members of the Northrop family that have been kitted are available only in vacuform. Execuform did a kit of the N1M, an earlier, even smaller flying wing with its wingtips cranked downward. Airmodel and, I believe, Nova did kits of the later fullsize B-35 and B-49.

"The Wing Will Fly", an interesting video on the history of the Northrop flying wings, turns up occasionally on the Discovery Channel. And Ed Maloney of the Chino Air Museum (who is working on restoring an N9M to flying condition) wrote "The Northrop Flying Wings".

All in all, this first experience with a resin kit was more enjoyable than I had expected. Having the body and wings in one piece definitely simplified the process, and cleaning up the detail parts from the resin wafer was not as daunting as it appeared when I opened the bag. I've already put another resin kit on order from Av Usk: the DFS-194, forerunner of the Me-163 Komet and another smallish, simple form. The bottom line is that nothing in the construction of the N9M was beyond the skills of an average modeller. If it had been, I certainly never would have completed the model!

KEVIN CALLAHAN



**IPMS
Seattle**

**From: Andrew Birkbeck
3209 N.E. 98th Street
Seattle, WA 98115**

To: William Hollowchuk
19607 - 134th Dr NE
Shelton WA WA 98580

