

# MiG-15bis Fagot and MiG-15UTI Midget Easy Assembly Kits

by Jim Schubert

**Scale:** 1/72

**Company:** Hobby Boss

**Price:** \$9.99 each

**Product/Stock #:**

80263, 80262

**Website:** Hobby Boss

**Product Web Page:**

MiG-15bis MiG-15UTI

**Product purchased at:**

Skyway

The MiG-15 became world famous in the Korean theater of the "Cold War" in the early 1950s. It was fast, nimble and hard hitting but spin recovery was a problem. The Soviets built over 12,000 of the type and another 6,000 were built abroad under license. Every Communist bloc and most "Non-Aligned" nations had them. This makes the choice of markings extremely wide.

In 1973, when IPMS-Seattle published its Quarterly Newsletter special issue devoted to Russian jets, 24 nations had MiG-15s; more acquired them later.

Back in 1972/73 when that special Newslet- ter was prepared there were only three MiG-15 kits available; the execrable Airfix kit in 1/72nd, the better-executed but less accurate Hawk kit in 1/48th and the beautiful, gem-like Tamiya kit in 1/100th. It wasn't until the '80s that we got better kits in the major scales. The



current Hobby Boss kits are, on all points of consider- ation, the best MiG-15s that I've seen. They do suffer from skimping on cockpit details but their quality and accuracy are first rate. And, they are cheap; retailing in the US for \$9.99.

The packaging and presentation is imaginative and attractive. I had already destroyed the packaging because one plane was finished and the other nearly so when Internet Modeler publisher Chris Banyai-Riepl persuaded me to write this article by bartering for it. Being an abso- lute computer dunce, I was having trouble trying to make the Libyan decals on my inkjet printer so Chris gave me a set of decals to write the article. You can, nonetheless, see the parts trees and the choice of markings in the instructions printed here. Most, if not all,

Hobby Boss Easy Assembly Kits provide two sets of markings; the decals work well if you choose to use them.

### Nitpicks:

Both kits are determined tail-sitters. To reduce long-term strain on plastic landing gear I use as little weight, as far forward, as possible and reduce weight aft of the main landing gear contact point as much as possible. I used various size ball-head grinders to thin the fuselage shell aft and remove as much plastic as possible, wherever possible in the tail, in underwing stores and wingtips of swept wing planes. Lengths of coreless solder are my preferred weight material; it is easy to cut and bend to fit the spaces available. CA glue secures the weight.

Neither kit has the gunsight or its glass.

Neither kit has much of a cockpit interior; not even seat belts or instrument panel decals.

The UTI lacks the fixed-frame windscreen for the rear cockpit.

As these are "Easy Build" kits I build them in compliance with current IPMS-USA rules for Out-Of-The-Box (OOB). That is an interesting challenge similar to writing Haiku in compliance with the 5-7-5-syllable rule. It is a truly interesting and absorbing challenge for a modeler otherwise obsessed with detail and accuracy. Try it; you'll find it more challenging than you imagined. See the **current rules**. Compliance with these is much easier than with the old, original OOB rules.

Fit is generally good. There's some unevenness in fuselage surface development in the MiGs due to the use of slide-molds; a little filing and sanding fair's the surface. A pointless engineering difference in the two kits introduced indexing-pin posts in the nose of the UTI behind the intake ring; they will be painfully evident in the finished model if not removed.

Both models were painted with Gunze- Sangyo Mr. Color No. 8 Silver lacquer on Tamiya Grey lacquer primer. The Cambodian decals are from an old Micro Scale sheet. The Libyan decals were, as





noted, given to me by Chris. The silver finish and decals were oversprayed with Model Master Metalizer Sealer. I am not a painting artist and did not attempt any panel differencing in the silver finish.



These were challenging, due to OOB rules, but fun builds. Try it; you'll like it. Both kits came from Emil Minerich's Skyway Model Shop in Seattle.

#### References:

IPMS-Seattle Quarterly Newsletter , Vol. 3, Nos. 3 & 4 (combined special issue on Russian Jets), April 1973.

Warbird History MiG-15 ; Yefim Gordon & Vladimir Rigmant, Motorbooks International, USA, 1993, ISBN 0-87938-793-9.

Aerofax - Mikoyan Gurevich MiG-15 : Yefim Gordon, Midland Publishers, UK, 2001, ISBN 1-85780-105-8.

MiG-15 In Action : Hans-Heiri Stapfer, Squadron Signal Publications, USA, 1991, ISBN 0-89747-264-

