

FineScale

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Modeler



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PAINT A BIG HURRICANE



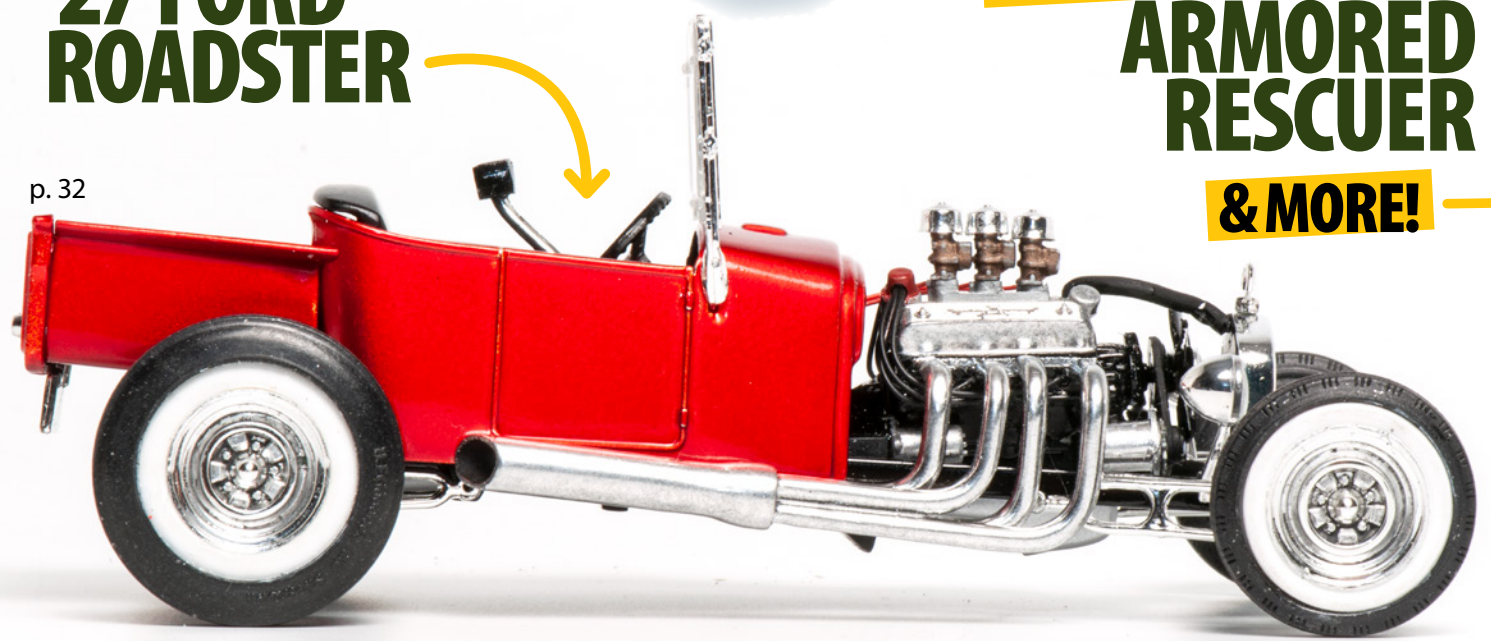
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KITBASH A '27 FORD ROADSTER

BUILD NASA'S ARMORED RESCUER

& MORE! →

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TIM BOYD



By Aaron Skinner

The wide world of modeling

When it comes to what to build, modelers come in several stripes. Broadly speaking, there are those who build models of a single genre — aircraft or armor or cars or ships or sci-fi or figures — and many may stick to a single scale or subject matter. Some of us within that group may stray from that focus to build something for personal reasons; the aircraft fan who builds his favorite car or a ship builder who strays to armor for a friend who served in the army.

At the other end of the spectrum are the generalists (I count myself among this group) who enjoy building anything that grabs their fancy. A big part of the attraction is the challenge of building something different and developing the skills and techniques unique to one. For example, placing photo-etched metal railings on a ship versus gloss finishes on a car versus detailing a cockpit for a plane; perfecting caked mud on a tank versus weathering a spaceship.

Don't get me wrong, I admire the modelers who aim to build one of something, for example building one of every variant of Bf 109 or Sherman. But it's not the way I work; if I have just finished a Harrier, a subject I especially love, the last thing I want to do is build another right away. Instead, I reach for a tank or spaceship or something else.

Or, to be more accurate, I probably have another project or two or three going at the same time. A coworker wandered into the *FSM* workshop a few years ago, looked around at the three ongoing projects I had on the

bench, and asked how I kept track of them. I didn't have a good answer for him. Other than the fact that I always want something to work on so when glue or paint are drying on one I can turn to the next.

One of the things I've always liked about *FineScale Modeler*, going back to when I started reading it in the 1980s (when the thought of working there seemed like an impossible dream!), is that it defined modeling in pretty broad terms. Car and sci-fi and figure builds rubbed shoulders with aircraft and armor and ships from the earliest issues. Rather than limiting modeling to a few subjects at the exclusion of others, it covered a little bit of everything.

I like to think of us a little like the old ABC TV show, *Wide World of Sports*. While tuning in to see basketball and football, you would be introduced to a sport you might not be familiar with — cliff diving, for example — that might become your new favorite. Come to *FSM* for the aircraft and, as you flip through the pages, you might suddenly have an urge to try your hand at a ship or a figure or a Gundam mecha. If that happens, give it a whirl. Good news! Trying your hand at a figure is a lot less dangerous than cliff diving or running with the bulls.

Be happy modeling no matter what and how you build!



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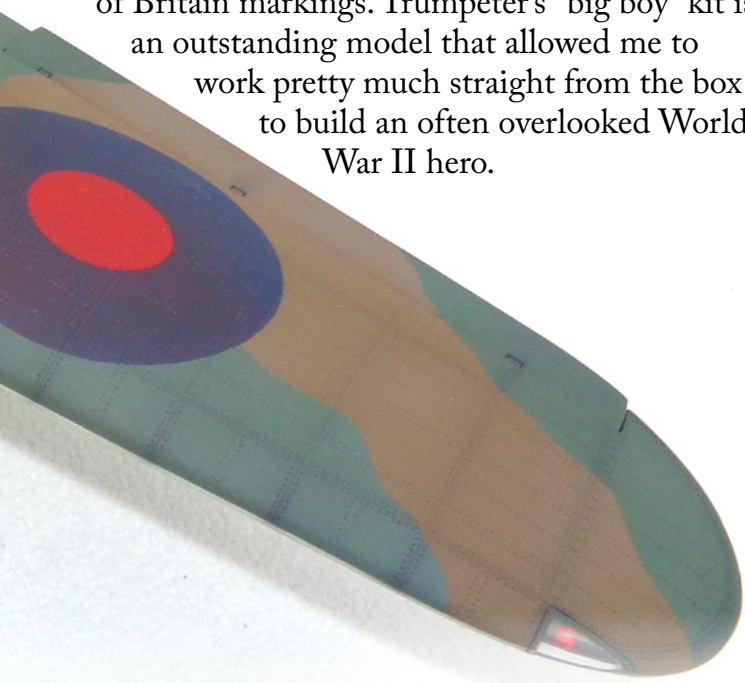
In the **EYE** *of the* **STORM**

Building a Trumpeter 1/24 scale Hawker Hurricane Mk.I from the box

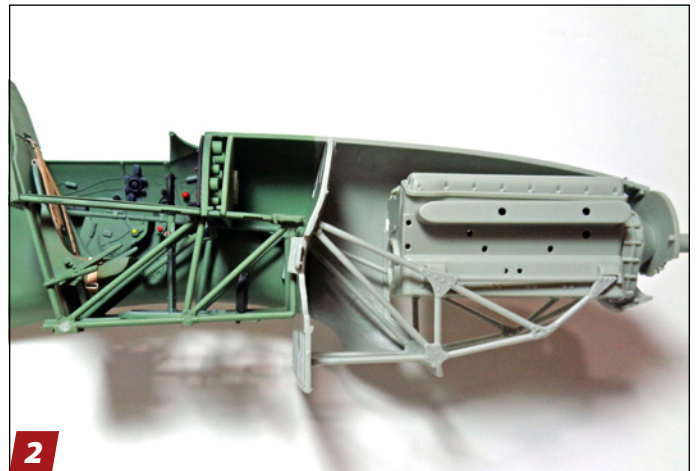
BY PHILLIP GORE

A couple of books about the Battle of Britain gave me much to think about concerning the Hawker Hurricane's contribution during that conflict. Frequently passed over in praise given to its younger, prettier, and better performing cousin, the Supermarine Spitfire, the Hurricane should be remembered as an aircraft that was at the right place at the right time. Its simple construction, high tolerance for significant damage, and quick repairability made it one of the main reasons the Royal Air Force was able to defeat the Luftwaffe.

Hurricane squadrons outnumbered Spitfire squadrons three to one when the battle began and are credited with more kills by the battle's end in October 1940. I paid my respects by building a Trumpeter 1/24 scale Mk.I in Battle of Britain markings. Trumpeter's "big boy" kit is an outstanding model that allowed me to work pretty much straight from the box to build an often overlooked World War II hero.



1 The cockpit builds up quite nicely and includes photo-etched metal (PE) seat belts and clear dial faces that are added to the back of the instrument panel. The main color I used was Model Master RAF Interior Green (No. 2062).



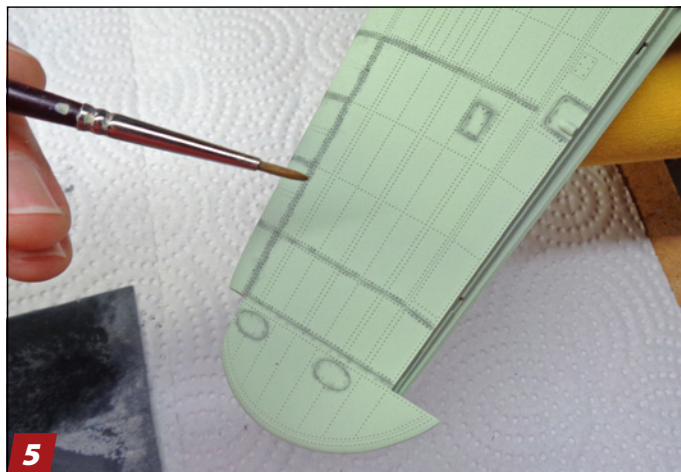
2 I did not want to display the engine, so there was no need to finish it. However, it was necessary to include its bare bones so the exhaust stacks could be properly mounted later.



3 Sanding out major seams erased some rivet details on the nose. A micro drill bit and pin vise restored the missing features.



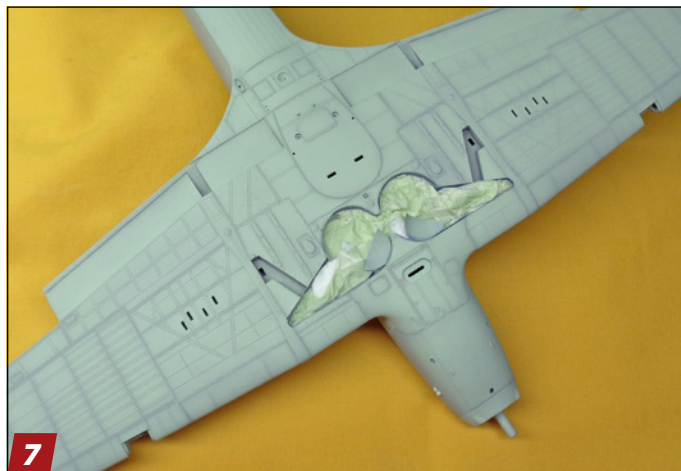
4 Although the subassemblies fit together well overall, a gap between the right wing and wing root required filling. I added a length of thin styrene strip attached with superglue to do the job.



5 To create a realistic, worn, paint finish, I first accent panel lines with dark gray pastel applied with a soft sable brush.



6 Second, I employ a thick, flat makeup brush to remove much of the pastel and blend and soften the effect. Notice, it's not nearly as stark as it was in Step 5, but the dark gray accent remains noticeable.



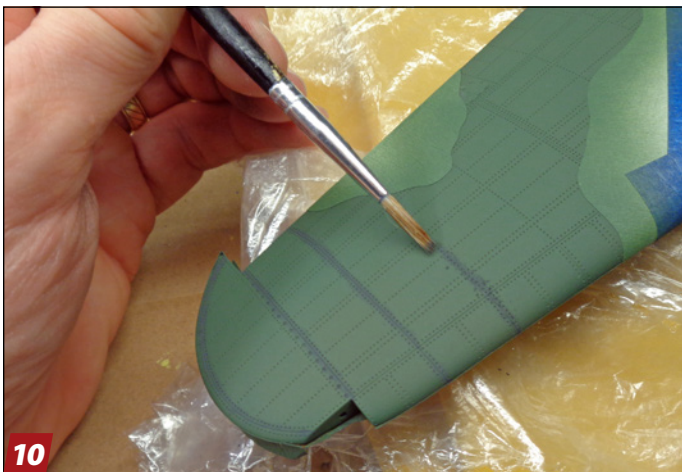
7 Third, I airbrush a thin wash of the base color — Humbrol Beige Green (No. 90) in this case — a good equivalent for Sky Type S — over the panel lines to bring the effect to a realistic level.



8 The upper surfaces received the same treatment as the lower surfaces, this time with Humbrol Dark Earth (No. 29). I randomly airbrushed areas with a much lighter version of the base coat to simulate faded paint. Here, the left wing is finished, and the right wing requires more work.

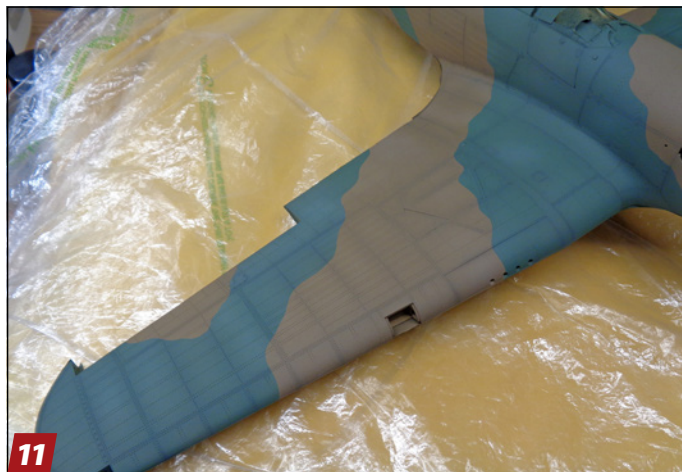


9 I went to the internet to find camouflage profile views to help create the mask patterns. Battle of Britain Hurricanes and Spitfires used either A or B Scheme camouflage patterns, which were actually mirror images of each other.



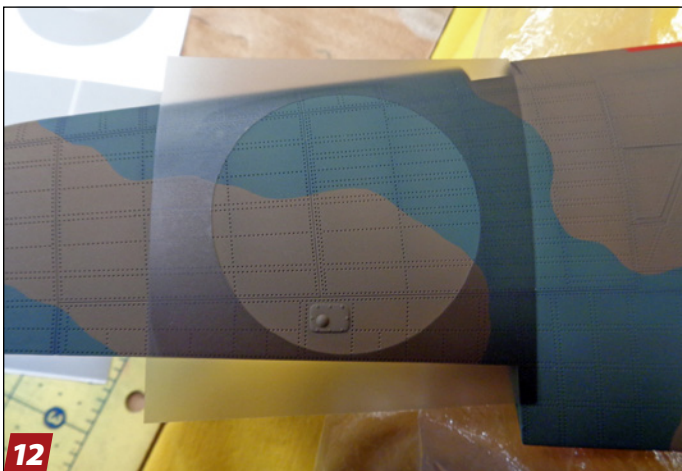
10

After I airbrushed Humbrol Dark Green (No. 30) for the second camo color, I repeated my previous accent and weathering steps.



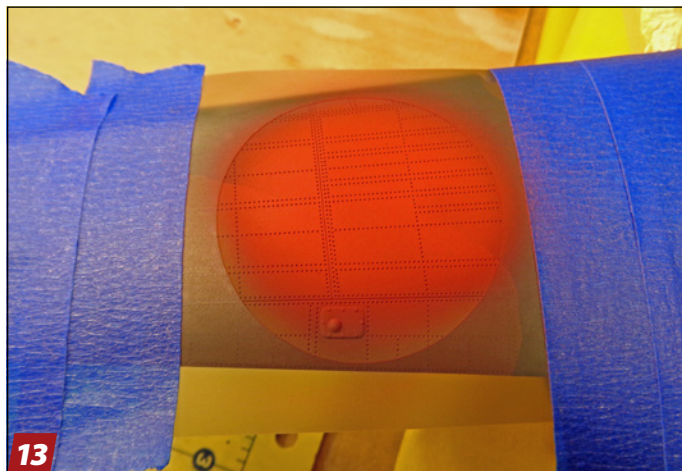
11

With all the masking tape off, you can see the shade variations inside the two camouflage colors. They're noticeable but don't attract undue attention.



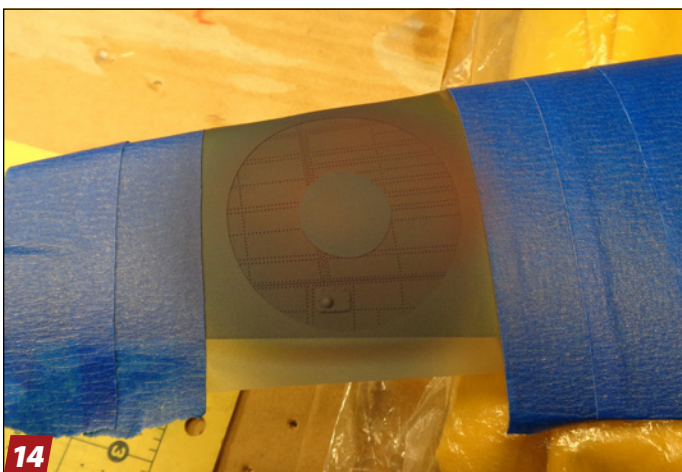
12

A Montex vinyl painting mask set (No. MM24013) made painting the roundels on the wings much easier. I didn't want to use decals because the kit's many rivet holes and raised details would make applying them an unpleasant challenge. Here, I've placed the outside border.



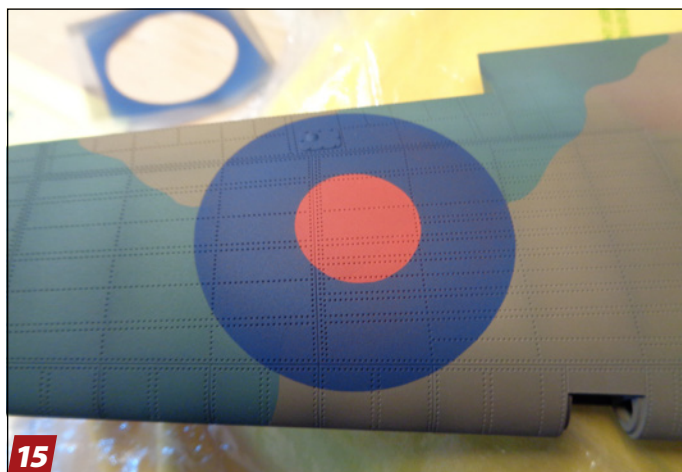
13

Additional masking tape prevented unintentional overspray. I painted the red for the central circle first.



14

I placed the vinyl mask for the central circle over the red area and airbrushed dark blue for the outer part of the roundel.



15

This was my first time using vinyl masks, and they impressed me with their ease of use and how well the roundels turned out. Even though they're simple patterns, painting the roundels took the model to the next level.



I "chipped" the paint around the cockpit, wing walks, and gun covers by lightly touching aluminum paint to the areas with the tip of small, finely pointed brush. Then I burnished dark gray pastel over the aluminum to reduce the shine.



Winsor & Newton Raw Umber oil paint simulated oil and grime in the gear bays. I applied the oil paint with a small, pointed brush and wiped away the excess with a cotton swab.



I painted the exhaust stacks Model Master Rust (No. 1785). After it had dried, black, orange, and tan pastel powder were rubbed in with cotton swabs to create the uneven look of burned metal.

FINAL THOUGHTS

TRUMPETER'S 1/24 SCALE HURRICANE

BUILDS into a fine replica of the WWII fighter. There was room to superdetail, but I wanted to see what I could do building straight from the box. And frankly, I think it's more than ready to take on any aggressor foolish enough to trespass into British airspace. **FSM**



Convert an M113 for rescue



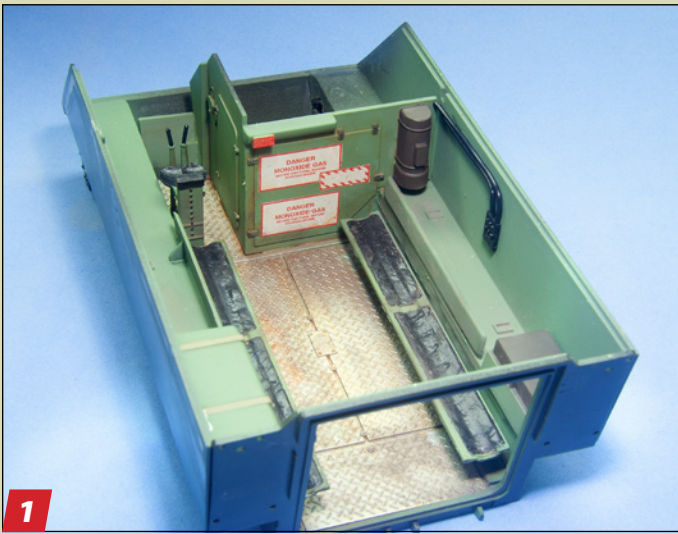
Building NASA's repurposed armored personnel carrier

BY MIKE DEL VECCHIO

Beginning with the Apollo program and throughout the space shuttle launches, NASA used surplus M113 armored personnel carriers to rescue astronauts and ground personnel from launch pads at the Kennedy Space Center in the event of a problem. The armor offers crews and firefighters protection from debris that may fall during an emergency on the pad. The vehicles went

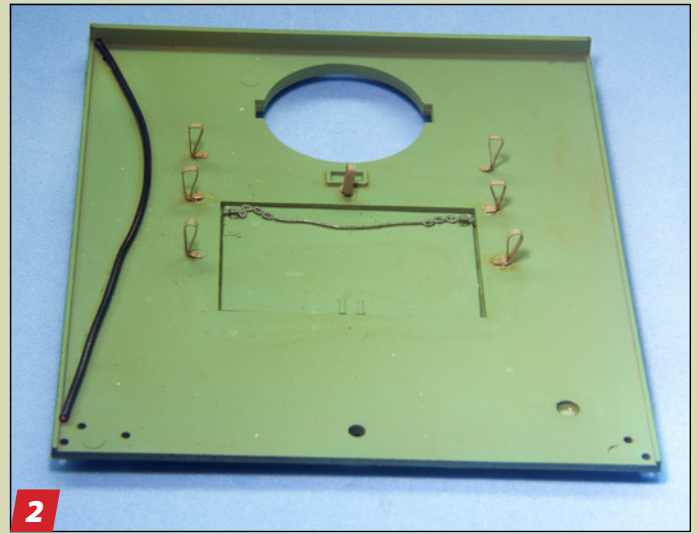
through a variety of modifications and color schemes during more than 30 years of service with the space agency. (In 2013, the aging M113s were replaced with surplus Caiman mine-resistant ambush protected [MRAP] six-wheel-drive vehicles that are faster and more spacious.)

To build one of the unique tracked rescue vehicles, I used an Italeri kit, but any manufacturers' M113A1 would work.



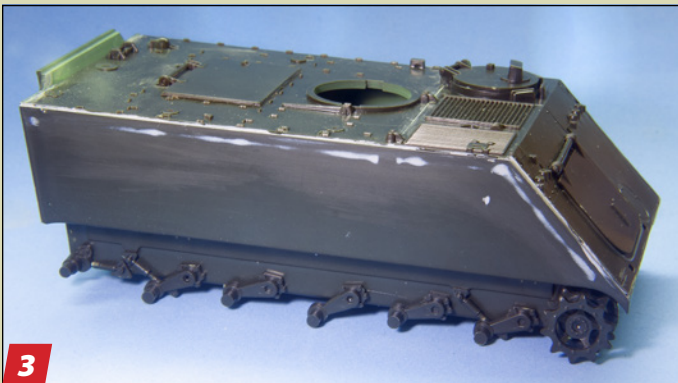
1

I painted the most of the interior with Tamiya Cockpit Green (No. XF-71) and the floor with Alclad II Aluminum (No. ALC101). The kit decals for the engine panel were incorrect, so I made my own (see Page XX). After inserting the interior into the hull, I added smaller parts and scratchbuilt wiring to a scratchbuilt radio box. I left out the center post and its seats to match the NASA M113. I weathered the interior with burnt sienna oil washes and Mig Productions Rubble Dust pigment (No. P234) and painted compartment latches with Alclad II Steel (No. ALC112).



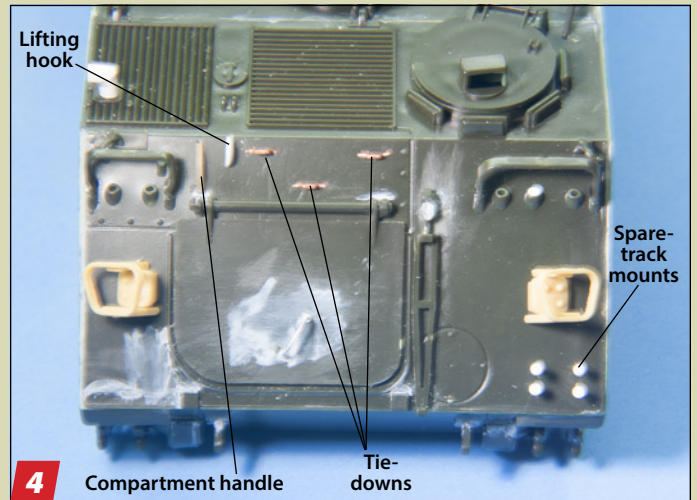
2

Inside the roof panel, I added hand straps made from leftover photo-etched metal (PE) along with a cable of 20-gauge stranded wire. After dry-brushing the latches and pull cable on the rectangular hatch with steel, I flowed on a burnt sienna wash.



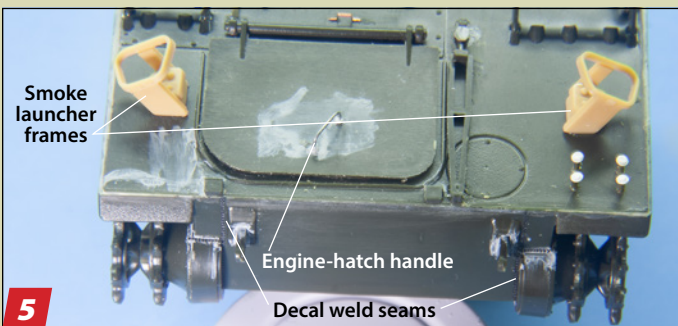
3

I assembled the body and represented the M113's fillet-type welds by painting Mr. Hobby Mr. Surfacer 500 into the seams between plates. I used the same material to fill sink marks on the sides before assembling and attaching the road-wheel arms and drive sprockets.



4

Referring to a photo of NASA's No. 3 M113, I detailed the front plate with tie-downs made from scrap PE above the engine hatch. For empty spare-track mounts, I used .020-inch brass wire with punched styrene caps and nuts, and I made the half-round lifting hook by punching a disc from .020-inch styrene and cutting it in half. The compartment handle is scrap PE.



5

I sanded off the solid-molded engine-hatch handle and replaced it with 26-gauge wire with discs of .010-inch styrene for the handle mounts. Italeri's kit lacked smoke launchers — the mounts and frames were still on the NASA vehicle — so I used spare parts from an Academy M113. Archer resin decals worked well for the weld seams on the lower front plate near the drive-gear housings.



6

On top, I capped the two unused antenna mounts with discs punched from .020-inch styrene sheet. Smaller discs of .010-inch styrene sheet replicated the nuts.



7 I painted the track well, wheels, and underside Tamiya Flat Black (No. XF-1). To reproduce the bright yellow on the body, I mixed 80% Tamiya Flat White (No. XF-2), 15% Yellow Green (No. XF-4), and 5% Cockpit Green.



8 Next, I applied my custom decals to the model. This step was more of a challenge, because unlike most armor models, this M113 is covered with markings, including some large ones. I used the kit's link-and-length track, which required work for fit and to lie properly on the road wheels. After painting and dry-brushing, they looked the part.



9 NASA's M113s carried commercial radio antennas, which I made using a 1-inch length of .020-inch brass rod with 32-gauge wire wrapped tightly around the base as a spring.



10 After drilling out the headlights, I painted the housings with Alclad II Chrome (No. ALC107) and dropped in M.V. Products lenses. For the lights that point to the sides, I mounted the kit parts on scrap PE bent to make a channel; the light cable is 32-gauge black wire. The lenses for the armored vision blocks and black taillights were finished with decal paper painted with Alclad II Jet Exhaust (No. ALC113), the top-coated with Tamiya Smoke (No. X-19). For the red taillights, I painted decal paper Alclad II Aluminium and Tamiya Clear Red (No. X-27).



11 A black pinwash deepened the engine grilles and popped other details. I added dirt on the top with black wash and Mig Productions Black Smoke pigment (No. P023). The same pigment added soot to the exhaust. Rust on the exhaust, bolts, and scratches was applied with a wash and dry-brush of raw sienna artist oils.



12

I applied a dot filter composed of white, burnt umber, and sap green artist oils dragged down surfaces with a brush damp with turpentine. An oil wash mixed from Van Dyke brown and burnt sienna followed. Finally, I painted the tracks with Alclad II Steel for the metal and a mix of equal parts Tamiya NATO Black (No. XF-69) and flat black for the rubber blocks. I finished the tracks with burnt sienna and Mig Productions Light Rust pigment (No. P024).

FINAL THOUGHTS

I NOTICED A GREEN HUE on the road wheels, probably from the original olive drab the M113 carried during its military career. I applied a green wash to the wheels and dry-brushed the lug nuts with steel. A wash of raw sienna added a hint of rust to details. After brushing fuel stains around the fuel filler caps, I placed the model on a simulated concrete road surface. **FSM**



NASA's No. 3 M113 rescue vehicle in action. To model this vehicle, Mike Delvecchio had to make custom decals.



Making *decals*

Custom decals are not as hard as they may seem

BY MIKE DEL VECCHIO

Although printing your own markings adds a step to the modeling process, it gives you a lot more flexibility in the way you display your models. Let's start with the tools you'll need and then move on to drawing, testing, and printing.

Hardware

You will need a computer and a photo-quality printer. Most modern ink-jet printers are photo quality, but, before you get too far, test to see how well it will do. Using a word processing program, type a few letters and numbers using Ariel or Helvetica at 6 point. Set the printer for best quality and photo paper, but print the letters and numbers on regular paper. If they are legible to the naked eye, you are good to go.

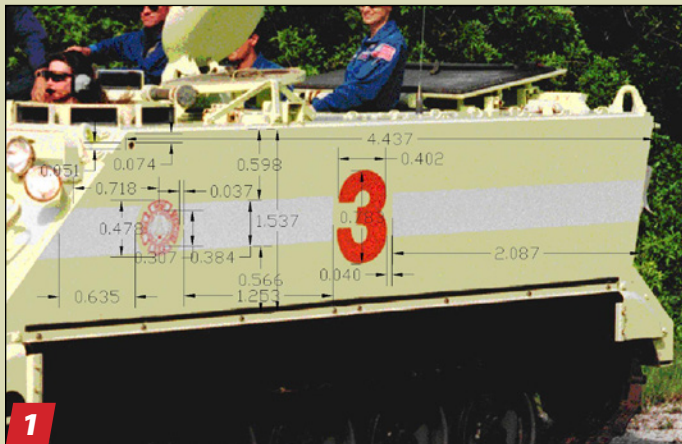
Paper

Decal paper is the next item. Some decal paper comes in odd sizes, but I prefer standard 8½- x 11-inches. That way I don't have to set the computer and printer for a custom-sized sheet. I like to buy mixed packages that contain several sheets of clear and several sheets of white decal paper. Be sure to purchase the correct kind of paper for your printer — ink-jet versus laser.

Scaling from photos

On many models, especially armor, most of the decals you will need to make are letters. Sometimes, like on the NASA M113, several markings will be more complicated. I scaled the side markings using AutoCAD. Since the top length is a known dimension, I could measure it against the model to calculate the scale factor needed. Now, anything I measure on the drawing was the correct size for the model, **1**.

This technique can be used with any software you can import photos and also allows measurements and scaling. It saves a lot of time versus a ruler and calculator. I did the same thing with photos of the APC's front and rear.



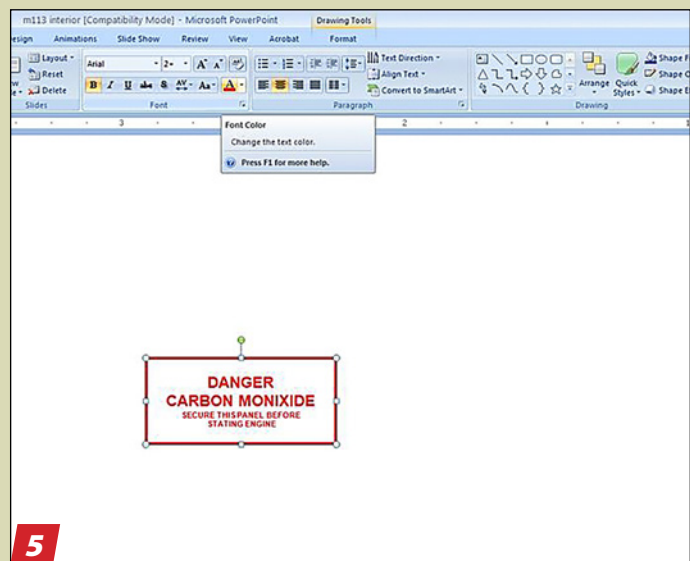
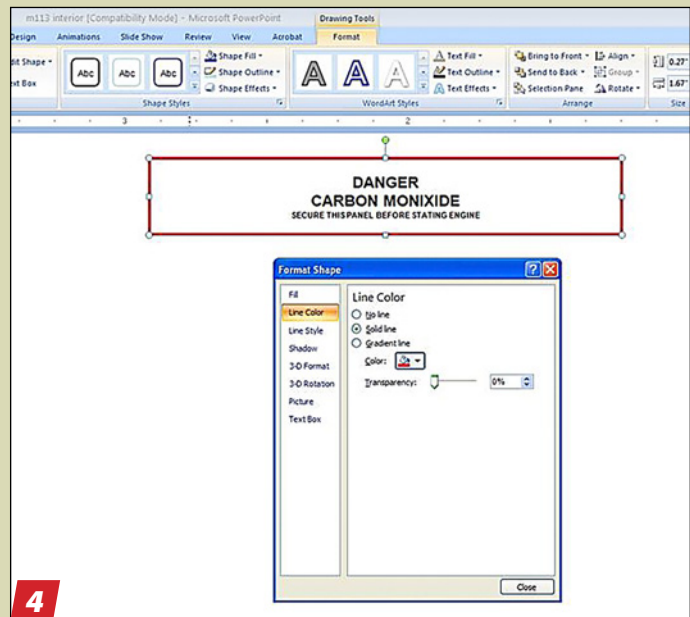
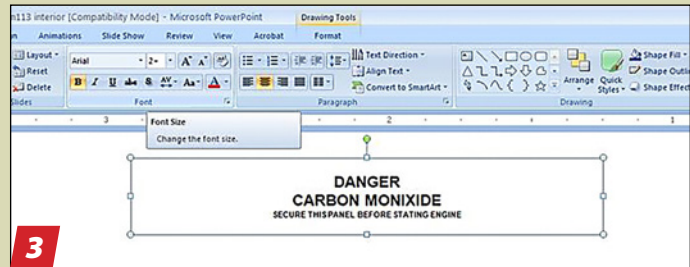
Designing the decals

Software is what will allow you to create the magic. Using a word processor, you can create word and number based items such as placards and stencils.

Look for stencil fonts online like Stencil Gothic BE. For non-stencil letters, Helvetica or Ariel are often a good match. When setting the size, 6 point is a good size for 1/35 scale bumper numbers.

I drew up the placards for the interior using PowerPoint (Ariel font; sized 8 point), **2**. Then I reduced the size to 4 point and bolded the main text; the smaller text was reduced to 2 point and remained bold, **3**. I double-clicked the outline of the text box, which opened a menu that allowed me to outline the box in red, **4**. Then I sized the box to fit the model, **5**.

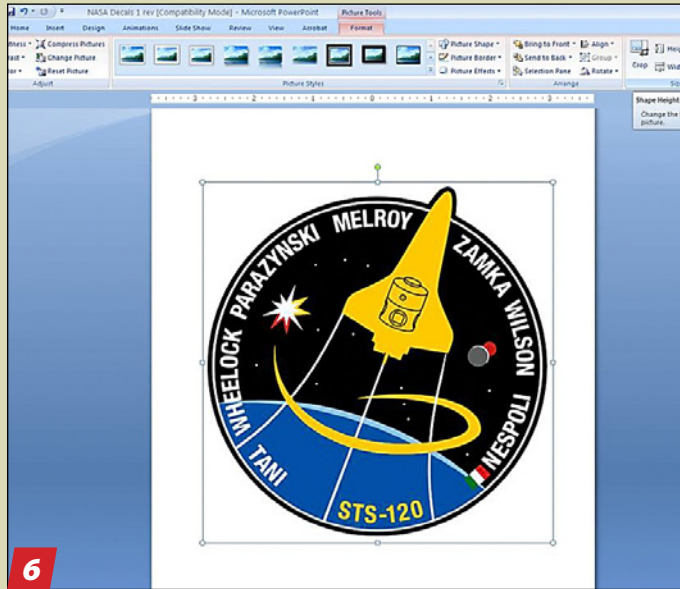
More complex items may require more complex software. Items like the NASA Rescue logo were drawn using AutoCAD, but any drawing program that allows sizing, text, and line drawing will work.



Photos

Developing decals from photos may require the use of image processing software, especially if you need to isolate an item by cropping or copying it from an image.

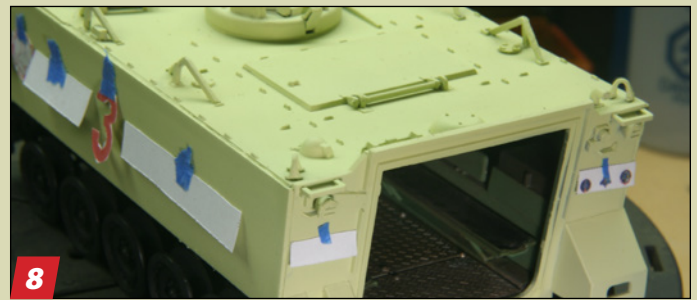
Check the internet first because many of the images you need may be available as separate items online. That was the case with the different mission patches on the NASA M113. I downloaded JPEGs of each, imported them into PowerPoint, and sized them to fit the model, **6**.



Decal

Before committing your designs to decal paper, print them on plain paper. This allows you to check the designs and test-fit them on the model, **7**. On the M113, my first effort was a tad short on the side near the rear, **8**. After fixing any problems, you are ready to print the markings on decal paper.

After printing, I let the sheet dry for 24 hours and then spray it with clear flat. I leave that to dry for 24 hours before cutting out applying the decals to the model. **FSM**



SCALING UP

Painting a 1/15 scale bust with
1/32 scale techniques

BY BRIAN WILDFONG

Most of my modeling and figure projects, like the U-boat diorama featured in *FSM* November 2020, have been in 1/48, 1/35, and 1/32 scales. Recently, I have dabbled in painting larger scale busts; there are so many awesome sculpts and subjects in the 1/16 to 1/10 scale range that a figure painter can't help but be tempted!

However, painting a bust for the first time can be intimidating. Would my techniques honed in smaller scales be adequate for a large-scale bust? Or would I get frustrated trying to master a new realm with a steep learning curve? I thought it might be an interesting experiment to see if I could “scale up” my painting techniques and tools. My experiences might serve to encourage you to take a chance on a large-scale bust project. Allow me to be your guinea pig!

Rather than dive into a much larger bust — 1/10 scale and up — I started with a smaller one. I chose one in 1/15 scale, not a huge step up from 1/32 scale, but definitely big enough for a first foray into a larger project. Produced by Black Army Modells (blackarmymodells.com), this bust convincingly depicts Sean Connery as Maj. Gen. “Roy” Urquhart from the 1977 movie *A Bridge Too Far*.

Would I also be able to replicate Connery's look as I up-scaled my painting?





1 As I do on small-scale figures, I undercoated the bust with DecoArt craft acrylics as a foundation for shading and highlighting with artist oils. The base flesh is a mix of approximately 6 parts white, 3 parts burnt sienna, and 1 part yellow applied in two or three thin coats.



2 To begin the eyes, I drew a thin upper eyelash and a rounded pupil with slightly thinned black acrylic paint using a 000 round sable brush. I refined the eyes' shapes with the acrylic flesh mix until I was satisfied.



3 Turning to artist oils, I blocked in basic shadows with Winsor & Newton (W&N) burnt sienna and highlights with a mix of 3 parts burnt sienna and 7 parts titanium white. Only a small dab of each color was needed to do the entire face — spreading the paint thinly is key to this step.



4 To blend the shadows and highlights, I stabbed and stippled the edges of the colors with a slightly frayed 0 brush barely damp with mineral spirits. The face had an overall orange tone, which I modified in the next steps involving wet-on-wet blending.



5

I blended Grumbacher raw umber into the deepest creases, and a mix of 2 parts burnt sienna and 8 parts white onto prominent points like the nose. Try to keep the oils out of the figure's eyes. If it happens, carefully clean it out with a thinner-moistened brush; mineral spirits won't disturb the acrylics underneath.



6

More intense oil color gently blended in small amounts on tiny areas add variety and life to the flesh. I blended alizarin crimson into the cheeks and nose and lined the crow's feet and forehead with cobalt violet. I applied permanent rose to the lower lip and a mix of 3 parts French ultramarine and 7 parts raw umber added the five o'clock shadow. Some of these colors can be difficult to fit on smaller faces, but there definitely was more room for them on this large face.



7

I base-coated the uniform and camouflaged Denison smock with custom-mixed acrylics, then followed with a filter of raw umber oil paint and mineral spirits to dull the brightness and add shadows. Note the small white catchlight I added to each eye with a 000 brush. I did this in oil paint so it could be removed with thinner if needed and reapplied. It really gives the eyes some character, but I rarely try catchlights in smaller scales because I find it difficult to size and place them.



8

Highlighting on the seams, pockets, and shoulder straps was applied with Naples yellow, and pinwashes of raw umber and lamp black helped define the seams. This technique works for both small- and large-scale projects.



9

My painting skills seem to be scaling up well on this larger bust, and he might even be starting to bear a passing resemblance to Connery! Raw umber oil over acrylics added eyebrows, hair, and moustache, and more intense highlighting was spotted on the most prominent points of the face with a mix of 9 parts titanium white and 1 part burnt sienna. I started painting the scarf with initial highlights and shadows in preparation for texturing.



10

Highlight and shadow colors dotted onto the scarf's folds simulate netting texture, a detail I found easier to do on this large bust without it looking out of scale. The glossy look will be eliminated by a clear flat overspray once the oils have cured.



11

To color the paratrooper's distinctive maroon beret, I started with alizarin crimson, then applied shadows with a mix of crimson and lamp black. Highlights were added with a mix of crimson and Naples yellow. I base-coated the British General Officers' cap badge with black acrylic.



12

Just like I do on smaller figures, I simulated the metallic cap badge with non-metallic paints. Tiny dots of gold ochre oil paint applied over the black acrylic created shadows.



13

Tinier dots of Naples yellow were applied to represent light catching the high points of the badge's detail.



FINAL THOUGHTS

I LET THE OILS DRY for three days before spraying the bust with two light coats of Testors Dullcote lacquer. Then, I superglued a pin in the bottom of the bust into a corresponding hole drilled into an ebony wood base and called this project done. In the end, the techniques, paints, and brushes I used here were almost identical to what I use on smaller scale figures — scaling up proved quite easy and enjoyable. I'm really pleased with the result. **FSM**



Capturing the
SPIRIT



OF '76

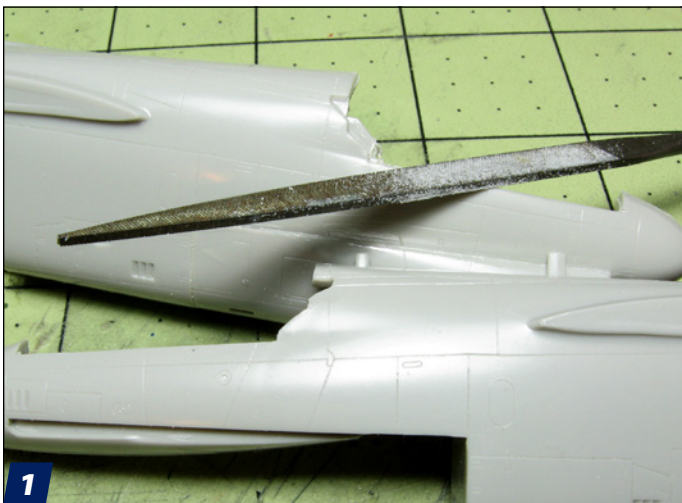
Detailing and finishing
Fujimi's 1/72 scale A-7A
Corsair as a Bicentennial
bird

BY FRANK CUDEN

In 1976, to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the creation of the United States of America, the U.S. Navy painted many aircraft in some of its most patriotic and colorful markings ever. Red, white, and blue abounded and several A-7 Corsair IIs were duly dressed as Bicentennial celebrations kicked off.

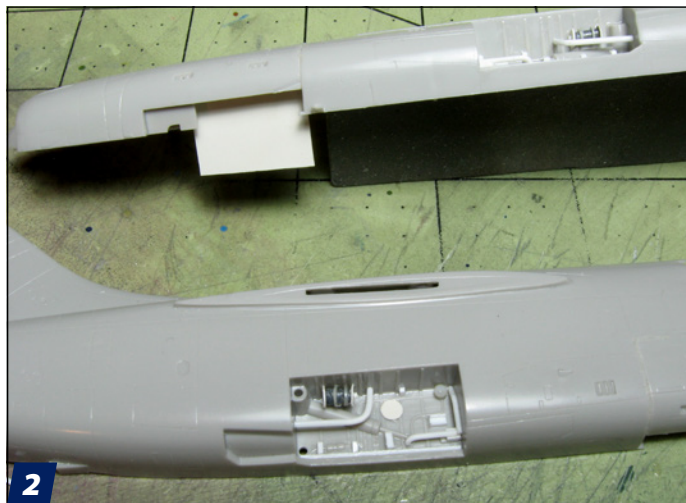
Fujimi's family of 1/72 scale Corsairs dates to the mid-1980s, and I picked up the A-7A, A-7B, and A-7E kits with plans to build them all. Deciding time was wasting, I pulled out the A-7A (No. F12) along with SuperScale decals that included a Bicentennial aircraft (No. 72-332) and set to work.





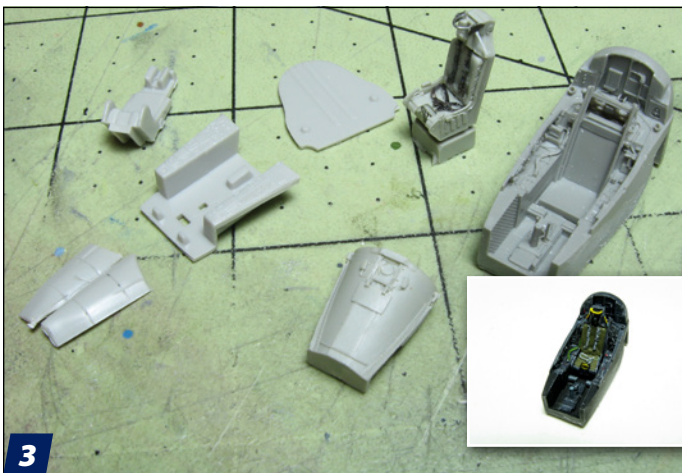
1

I had an Aires A-7E resin cockpit (No. 7147) on hand, not quite right for the A-7A but better than the kit parts. So, using a little poetic license as well as sanding, I fitted it to the Fujimi fuselage. Per Aires' instructions, I removed some of the indented plastic aft of the cockpit opening.



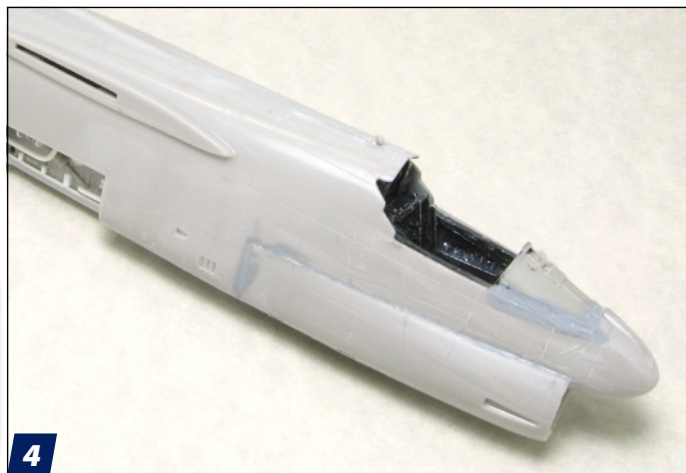
2

The replacement cockpit had no provision for the nose wheel well, so I added a new top for it with styrene sheet. While I had the fuselage halves in hand, I enhanced the detail molded into the main gear bays with styrene rod and strip and spare parts.



3

The Aires set included a new instrument panel shroud, so I cut the shroud from the fuselage halves (left). I added a wire face curtain ring to the seat; the photo-etched metal (PE) seat belts were stiff, but after careful positioning and bending, they looked the part.



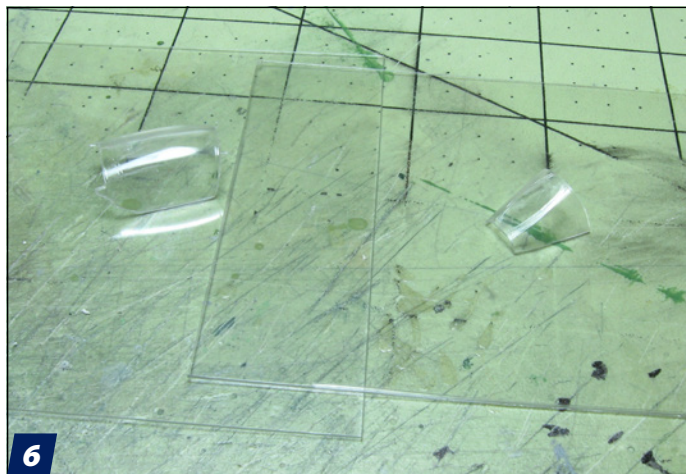
4

I sandwiched the cockpit between the fuselage halves, added the resin shroud, and blended it into the body with putty. Before I glued the intake together, I filled it with buckshot. I found a Corsair intake cover in my spares to hide the buckshot on the finished model.



5

I like to add the gear legs early to keep the model off the work surface while painting. With the fuselage together, I boxed in the nose gear bay with styrene sheet. Obviously, I had to use filler on the wing roots.

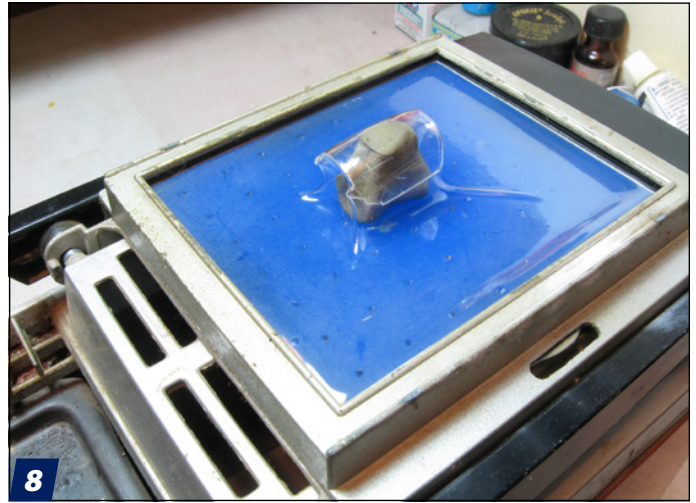


6

I planned to replace the kit's clear parts with thinner vacuum-formed parts, so I cut .015-inch clear styrene to fit my trusty Mattel Vac-U-Form. I will use the kit parts as masters.



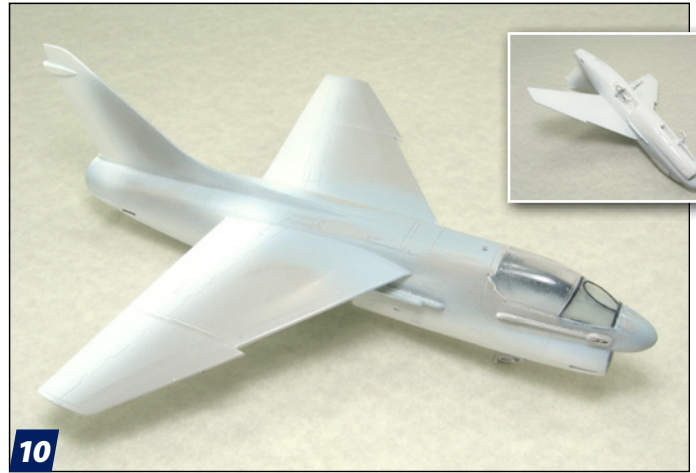
7 Before heating the plastic, I placed the kit parts on supports made from clay to raise them above the vacuum platform.



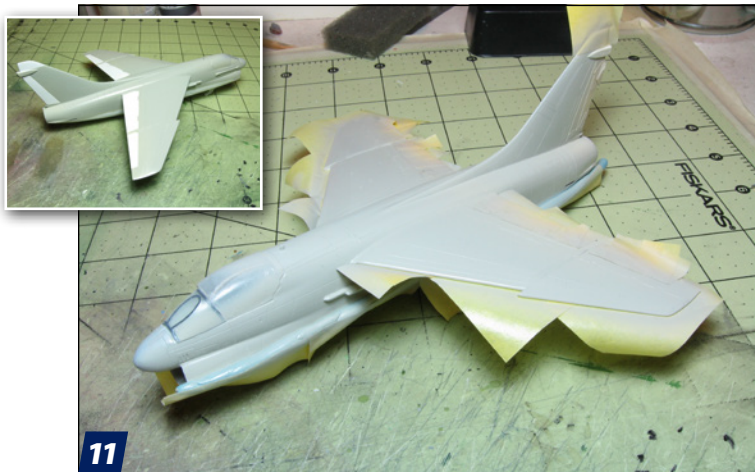
8 Raising them allowed the softened plastic to pull around the edges of the kit parts and define the edges. Using scissors and a hobby knife with a new No. 11 blade, I removed the excess plastic and set the windshield and canopy aside until later in the build.



9 No modeling workshop is complete without leftover parts separated in containers. Delving into an old coffee can labeled "Tanks," I found two Corsair wing tanks from a discarded A-7 project. To save time, I decided to add them to this build rather than assembling the kit tanks.



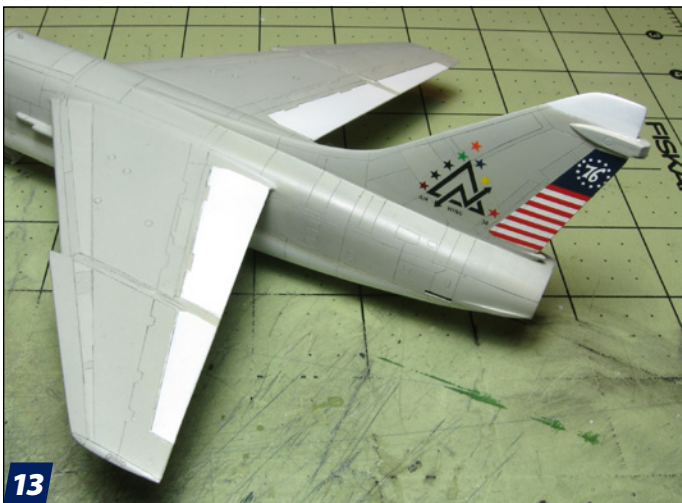
10 Tacking on the kit windshield and canopy to mask the cockpit. I airbrushed the underside, rudder, stabilators, and the tops of the control surfaces white. The tip of the vertical tail should be white also.



11 After masking the rudder, ailerons, flaps, and fin tip with tape, I ran thin rolls of poster putty along the fuselage sides to produce a slightly soft demarcation line for the camouflage. I sprayed the upper fuselage with gloss light gull gray (FS16440).



12 To break up the gray, I masked several panels and airbrushed them with light gull gray lightened with a few drops of white. Note the lighter panels on the vertical tail, the segmented panels behind the leading-edge slats, and on the fuselage.



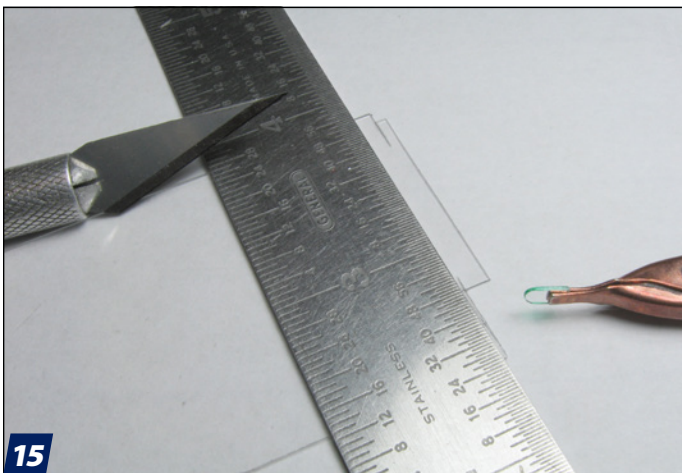
13

Before starting the decals, I accented panel lines by drawing a soft B artist pencil along the recesses. A layer of clear gloss sealed the graphite to prevent it smearing and provided a smooth foundation for decals.



14

As a precaution given the age of the SuperScale sheet and the kit decals, I brushed on two coats of Microscale Decal Film. I modeled an aircraft from VA-305, Reserve Carrier Air Wing 30, at Naval Air Station Point Mugu in May of 1977.



15

I cut the heads-up display glass from clear plastic, sanded the top round, and painted the edges with Tamiya Clear Green (No. X-25). Coloring the edges made the HUD pop on the panel shroud.



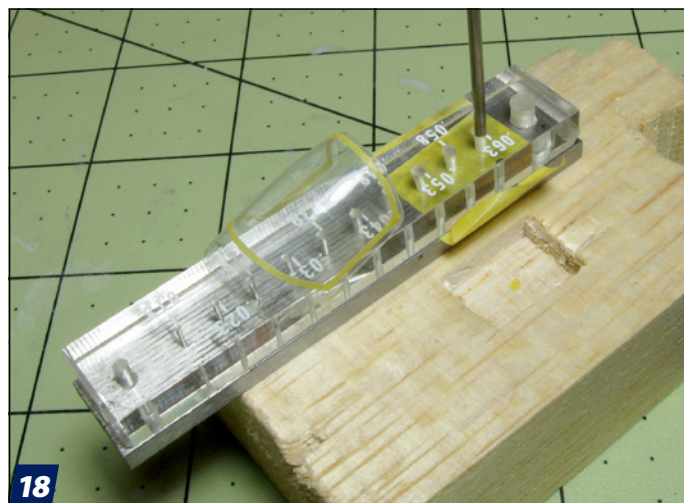
16

Before adding a little streaking with pastel dust, I flat-coated the entire aircraft and sealed the decals. I kept pastel weathering, visible on the upper surfaces of the model restrained because a little goes a long way.



17

For the thin black stripes on the fuselage missile rails, I applied SuperScale striping decals. I initially thought the dorsal spine rotating beacon had an antenna and painted the upper portion black. I realized my error later and painted it Tamiya Clear Red (No. X-27) over silver.



18

Masking straight canopy frames is easy, but curves are another matter. I punched circles to match the curves at the front lower corners of the Corsair's canopy. I carved a shallow square depression in a block of balsa wood and placed the punch-and-die over that to preserve the punches.



19

I hand-painted the frames with black followed by a coat of flat light gull gray. For the yellow sealing tape, I cut strips from an old decal sheet and applied short sections to account for the curves; a coat of Solvaset blended the seams. When applying decals, I add five drops of Dawn dish soap to a baby food jar full of distilled water. The soap breaks the water's surface tension and distilled water eliminates residues from chemicals in tap water.

FINAL STEPS & THOUGHTS

THE LAST ITEMS TO BE ATTACHED were a pair of tiny pitot tubes just below the antiglare panel forward of the windshield. I didn't add them earlier because we all know how easy it is to have them disappear when handling the model. I painted the pylon mounting lugs dark gray to match those on the scrounged wing tanks. Photos of this plane showed a Remove Before Flight flag hanging on a lanyard from the right side of the canopy; a sheet of Verlinden dry-transfer flags (No. 743-01) provided it. The set included red material onto which I pressed the white lettering. I added two to the material, one right side up and one upside down, trimmed the red backing material, and carefully folded it. A short piece of thin sprue provided the lanyard. I crinkled the "flag" a bit and then glued the sprue lanyard to the inside of the canopy frame. I hand-brushed clear red and clear green on the wingtips and replicated staining under the fuselage with yellow and brown pastels. Reflecting back on the Bicentennial celebrations, the Fujimi A-7A adds a splash of patriotic color to my showcase. **FSM**



FURTHER ADVENTURES *in modeling!*

Have the courage to add simple wiring and fiber optics to your next model

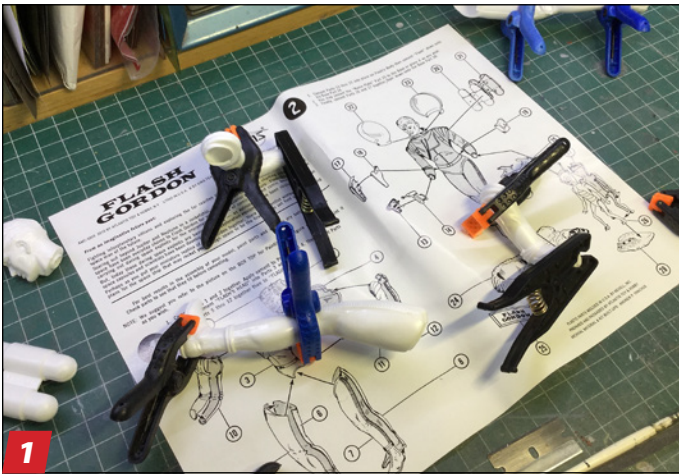
BY JEFF POLLIZZOTTO

As a child of the 1950s, I've always been a fan of classic black-and-white movies and cliffhanger serials. The *Flash Gordon* serials from 1936 starring Buster Crabbe, Jean Rogers, and Charles Middleton were popular among the youth of the period and came from the very successful 1934 comic strips from King Features Syndicate.

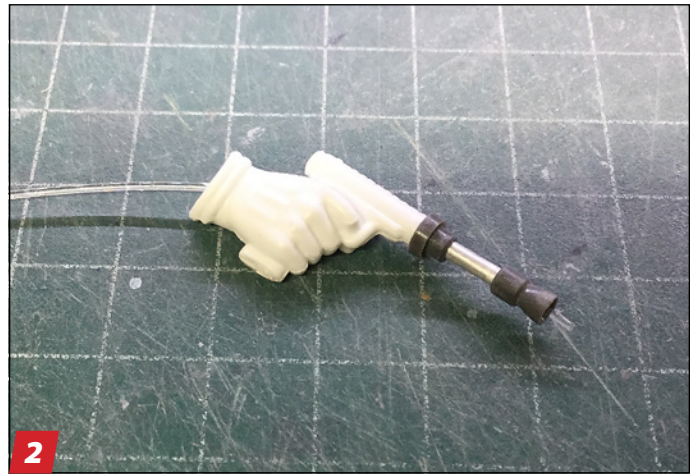
Revell originally released its 1/8 scale Flash Gordon kit in 1965, and it hadn't seen production for over 50 years. After Atlantis purchased the original molds from Revell, it was finally re-released in 2016. A simple kit of merely 23 parts, it includes Flash (who stands about 9 inches tall), a Martian figure, two-part base, a clear helmet for Flash, and a nameplate.

In my mind, the best way to get this kit on a rocket ship to Mars was to add a diorama base with room for a battery and fiber optics lighted by LEDs. Then Flash would be ready to face the unknown!

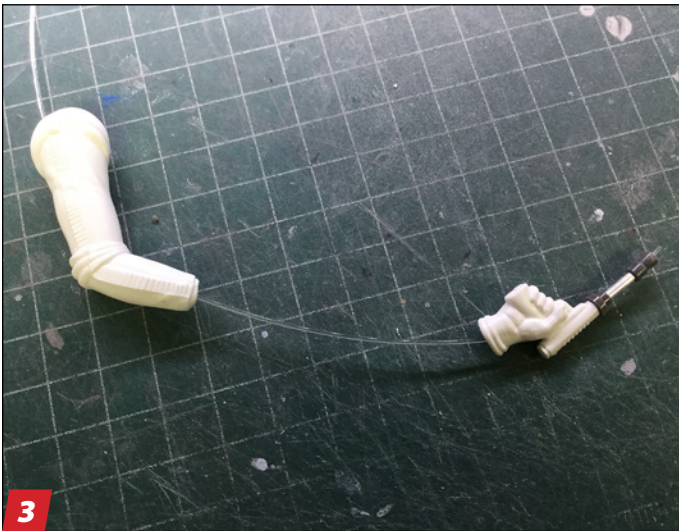




1 After going over the kit's parts to get a sense for how the model went together, I assembled Flash's arms and legs. But thinking ahead, I wanted to add lights to the Martian's eyes and Flash's ray gun. So, I clamped the arms and legs and turned my attention elsewhere.



2 The kit's ray gun needed an upgrade. I made a new barrel from aluminum tube and added details shaped from styrene rod. And, as I had always planned, the new parts provided a channel for a single fiber optic lead to represent the "ray".



3 Of course, I ran the fiber-optic line from the gun and through Flash's arm. A small 3mm LED mounted at the shoulder would connect to the end of the line.



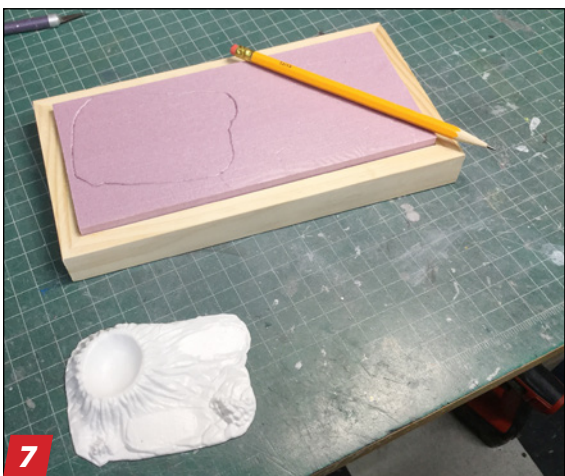
4 I assembled most of Flash's body and ran wires through the torso and one leg to the arm. I mounted the LED to the shoulder, attached the fiber optic to the LED, and soldered the electrical leads and 417 OHM resistor in place.



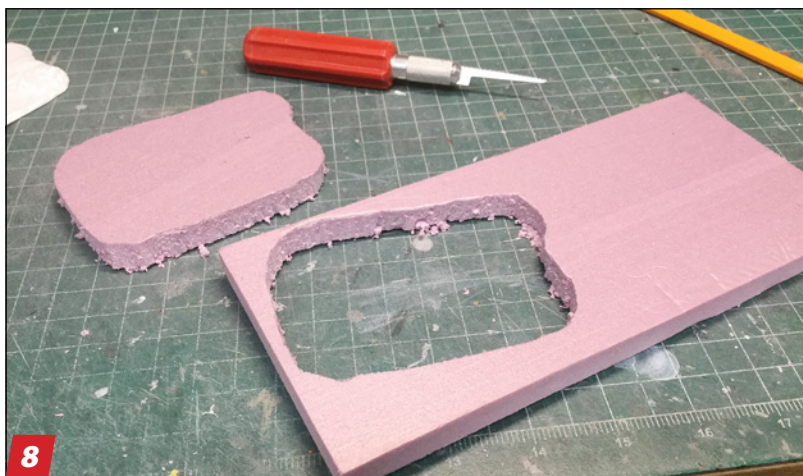
5 I made a base out of 3/4-inch MDF and a wooden frame. Then I moved the parts of the kit's base around on my base to get an idea of where I would like them positioned.



6 I cut a section of foam insulation large enough to fit in the center of the MDF base. And here's where the smaller base for the Martian figure went back in the box, because it didn't fit well with my emerging design.



7 Finally satisfied with my placement of Flash's plastic base, I traced its outline on the foam with a sharp pencil.



8 Using a narrow craft saw, I carefully cut the foam from the main block. The hole would provide a location for the kit base and allow it to sit level with the surface of the foam. I wanted it to look like part of the landscape, not just stuck on top.



9 I went the plastic part, leveled, and epoxied from underneath. After the epoxy had set, I carefully filled the seam between the foam and the styrene base with two-part plumber's epoxy putty. Then I sculpted the Martian surface with 100-grit sandpaper.



10 Next, I painted the foam and plastic kit base with gesso (pronounced jess-o). The gesso helped fill and smooth the foam base's texture and blend it with the styrene part. When the gesso was dry, I followed up with a few coats of gray primer.



11 Two-part epoxy putty filled the Martian's head. When hard, it will provide a solid base for the fiber optics and new antennas I planned to make. I also filled the back of Flash's waist pack with the putty to give it a more realistic look when sanded flat.



12 After the epoxy set, I drilled holes for the Martian's eyes through the epoxy putty. Then I sprayed the inside of the figure with gray primer, waited for it to dry, and followed up with a coat of black primer. This would help block any potential light leakage.



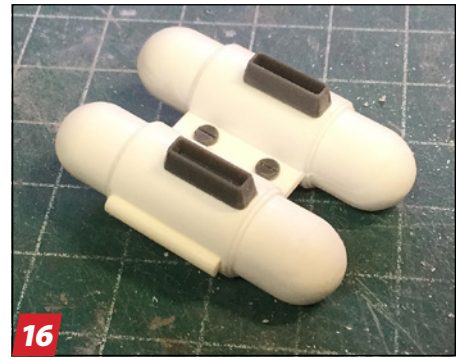
13 I cemented a socket made from Evergreen tube inside the figure cavity. The fibers run through the eye holes and into the open end of the tube. I epoxied a 3mm LED at the other end of the tube with a 417 Ohm resistor and electrical wires running through the legs.



14 I cemented together the figure halves and filled the gaps with putty. After sanding smooth the seams, I sprayed the Martian with a few coats of gray primer. Then came a coat of Tamiya Chrome Silver (No. X-11).



15 Flash lacked some realism. I removed the molded-on cables from the oxygen tanks to the neck of the spacesuit with a rotary tool. Then I sanded the area smooth with the surrounding contours.



16 The plain oxygen tanks needed upgrading. Nothing complicated, but a couple of greeblies from my spares box glued on after assembly and sanding did the trick.



17 Flash's subassemblies received gray primer. After some assembly, I sprayed a few coats of flat white primer, keeping the arms separate for good coverage. The air tanks were left off because they'll be painted flat red later on.



18 With the primer dry, I glued the arms to the torso, ran the wires from the ray gun LED through one leg and out the foot, and sprayed the entire figure Tamiya Pearl White (No. TS-45) directly from the can.



19 I airbrushed the air tanks Tamiya Flat Red (No. XF-7), masked with tape, and painted details Flat Aluminum (No. XF-16) and Dark Gray (No. XF-24). I also masked around the belt and straps and airbrushed those Tamiya NATO Black (No. XF-69).



20

I make no secret that faces and eyes have always been a challenge for me. But I think Flash's turned out pretty good. I attached Flash's head and ran new oxygen lines made from old guitar strings.



21

The Martian was painted with Tamiya Clear Green (No. X-25). I clipped the fiber-optic lines flush with the eyes and was careful not to cover them with paint.



22

Now that the figures were mostly finished, I started to paint and detail the foam base insert. First, I hand-painted the entire top Tamiya Yellow Green (No. XF-4).



23

With the yellow green base coat down, I darkened the cracks and crevices with flat black. Then I positioned the Martian "foliage" on the base until it was to my liking.



24

The scene needed to look not only otherworldly, but *early 20th-century* otherworldly. I painted the weird plants gloss red and then gave them a wash of black Tamiya Panel Line Accent Color (No. 87131).



25

Under the base, I installed the switch, battery holder, and power wires. I bought all of my electrical supplies for Flash from allelectronics.com. The fiber optics came from thefiberopticstore.com.



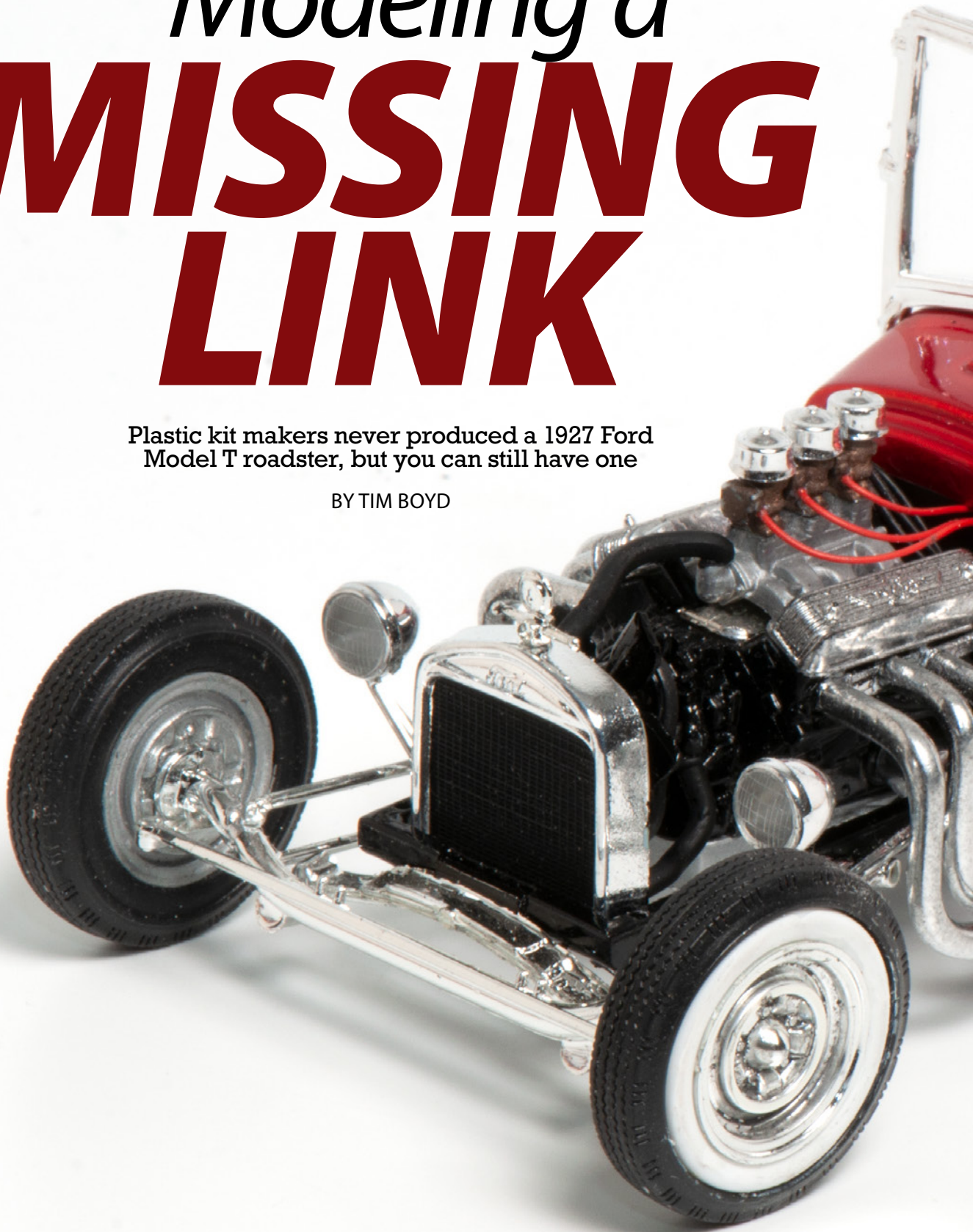
FINAL THOUGHTS

AS A SCI-FI FAN and old-movie buff, building this reissue of a long out-of-production Revell kit was an opportunity I couldn't pass up. I think the details on Flash's ray gun and air tanks, along with the lighted eyes and gun barrel add a little something special. I hope this inspires you to try some simple wiring for your next model. **FSM**

Modeling a **MISSING LINK**

Plastic kit makers never produced a 1927 Ford Model T roadster, but you can still have one

BY TIM BOYD





Kitbashing a 1927 Ford Model T roadster opens the door to all sorts of model car topics, from restored antiques to a 1960s-era T-bucket hot rod. Tim Boyd shows you the key steps to building the body, and it's easier than you might expect.

Over the last six decades, modelers have been able to build scale replicas of nearly every significant vintage Ford car design. Within the tighter context of the Ford Model T in 1/24 and 1/25 scale, kits have included everything from 1913 brass-era replicas through to 1923, 1925, and 1927 vintage kits. The virtually identical 1926-27 Model Ts (we'll refer to them collectively as the 1927 for the rest of this story) were a significant departure from earlier designs, with a smoother transition from the hood to cowl to body side and more stylish fenders. Years later, the 1927 Model T became a highly valued starting point for vintage speedster, hot rod, drag racing, dry lakes racing, and show car projects.

The most popular body style for the 1927 Model T was the open-cockpit, single-seat roadster, usually accompanied by either a stylish turtledeck or a utilitarian pickup bed. AMT ran an ad in 1959 promoting upcoming Trophy Series kits that would include a 1927 Model T "3 in 1" roadster kit, but the '27 Model T roadster-body style was never produced in 1/25 scale by anyone in plastic.

Various resin model manufacturers have produced versions of the 1927 Model T roadster in both turtledeck and pickup styles, but none lived up to my expectations for accuracy. So, I set about kitbashing my own.

Starting with either the AMT or Revell 1927 Model T touring body, along with a few well-placed cuts and minimal bodywork, your own 1927 Model T roadster is a fairly easy conversion. While I completed mine as an early 1960s-style T-bucket hot rod, with the steps shown here, you could just as easily build a factory-correct museum restoration; the centerpiece of a diorama showing a dilapidated, rusty farm field derelict; or a period racer for beach, drag strip, or salt flats competition.

Grab your base kit, a ruler, some masking tape, a razor saw, and let's get busy!



1

The only 1/25 scale 1927 Model T open-body kits were the four-door "touring" configurations produced by Revell (left) and AMT (right). These kits originated in 1976 and 1963, respectively, but have been reissued multiple times and are relatively easy to find at reasonable prices.



2

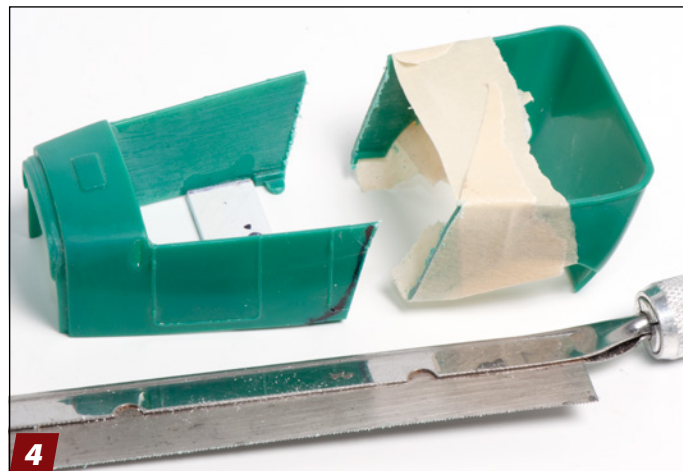
I proceeded with the Revell 1927 Model T touring body and vertically sectioned it to achieve the shortened roadster appearance. Using reference photos, I scaled the rear bulkhead kickup and then marked the curved, near-vertical line on the Revell body.



Several versions of this kit were produced in different variants. If possible, avoid the one molded in blue as shown here. It is notorious for having brittle plastic.

3

Before making any cuts on the Revell Model T body, I cut and glued a reinforcement brace of .040-inch styrene sheet. I located it at the bottom of the touring body, just forward of where I would be making the cuts in the side panels.



4

Referencing the lines drawn on the body earlier, I marked cutlines with masking tape to keep my razor saw cuts on track. I worked carefully with short strokes and much patience until the front portion of the body separated from the rear.



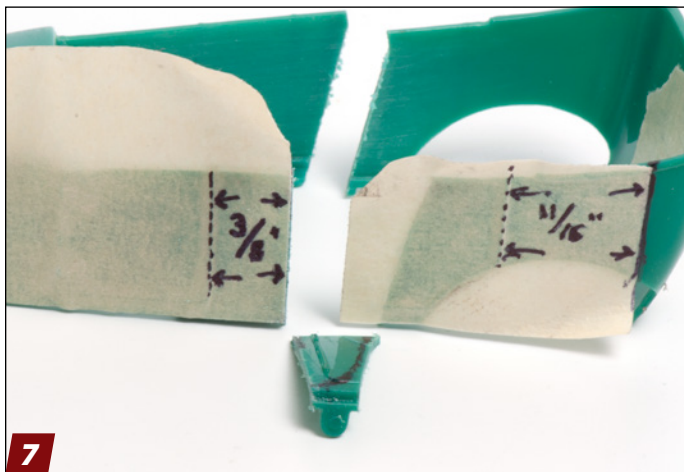
5

The rear end of the touring body must be narrowed. I centered a strip of masking tape 1/4-inch wide over down the back panel. Again, employing a razor saw, I cut along each side of the masking tape and discarded the central portion left over.



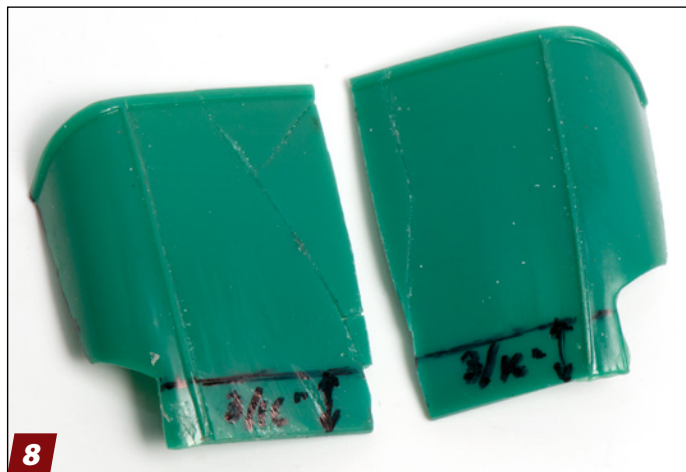
6

The two remaining pieces of the rear panel were temporarily taped together and positioned next to the front portion of the body. Referencing the marks for the initial cuts in Step 4, I marked a common line on both the front and rear parts.



7

The cuts to come were $\frac{3}{8}$ inch rearward of the engraved front door opening on the front body piece and $\frac{1}{16}$ inch behind the engraved backdoor opening on the rear body piece. As before, I used a razor saw guided by strips of masking tape.



8

The two rear body pieces were now lined up with the front body portion, and I determined the rear pieces need to have about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch removed from the bottom edges. The exact amount was measured, marked with tape, and cut away with a razor saw.



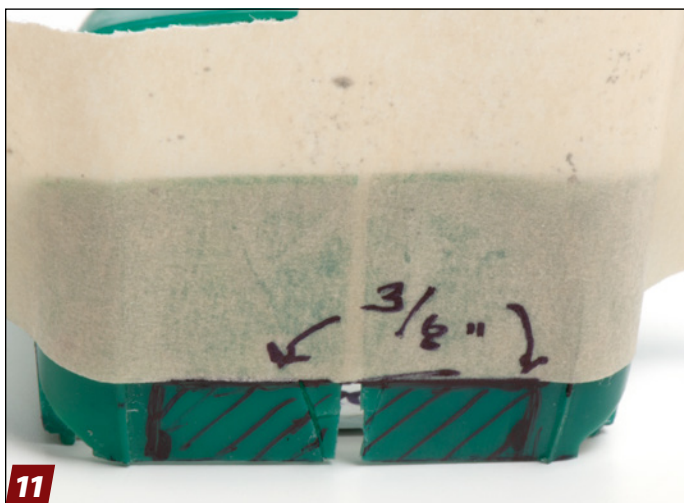
9

Using masking tape as backing, I test-fit the two rear pieces to the front body piece. I was satisfied with the fit and glued them together first with plastic cement and then reinforced the joint with superglue.



10

It is critically important to precisely align the two rear pieces to the bodysides of the front half to minimize bodywork at those joints. Filling the resulting triangular gap in the rear is easier to fix than dealing with misaligned joints on the body sides.



11

Because I was building a low-riding hot rod, I needed to remove a further section of the rear panel to provide clearance for the Z'ed frame rails. My cut was $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch high (removing the cross-hatched area). A factory-stock Model T roadster does not need this modification.



12

At this point, the major bodywork has been completed, and the correct proportions of the 1927 factory Model T roadster body have been achieved. Time for a moment to reflect, because the hard part is over.



13

I placed masking tape over the two gaps in the lower body from the outside, applied gap-filling superglue to the areas from the inside, and sprinkled styrene shavings on top. When dry, I removed the tape and filed the areas to shape. After several rounds of this, the gaps soon filled.



14

I followed the same procedure in filling the triangular narrow gap at the center of rear of the body. Notice the finished gaps at the corners as well as the filled triangle. With the end in sight, I repeated what revered model-car journalist Hank Borger would often say: "Hang in there!"



15

Raised molding runs along the top of the body on the real 1927 Model A roadster bodies. I replicated it with Evergreen styrene strip, starting at one end and gluing small sections in place with fast-acting cement; I was able to gently shape and secure the trim directly on the body.



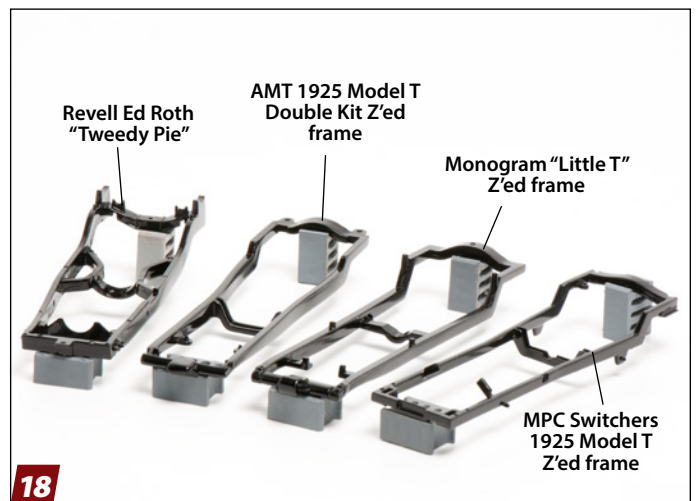
16

Whew! With the raised molding complete, I could pair the 1927 roadster body with either a turtledeck or a factory-stock pickup bed. You'll need to construct your own turtledeck, but the pickup bed can be secured from parts in the AMT 1925 Model T Double Kit. Me? Read on!



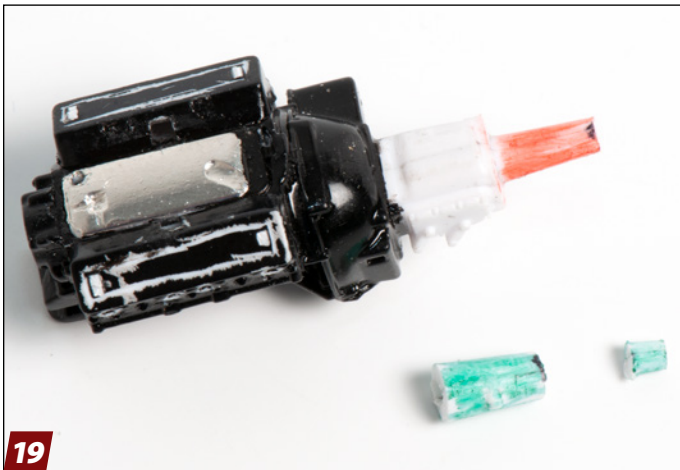
17

After priming the body, I used automotive body putty to fine tune some surfaces (seen in red). After sanding, I further finessed any remaining areas with Mr. Hobby Mr. Surfacer 500 applied with a brush. The body then received a final sanding and another coat of primer.



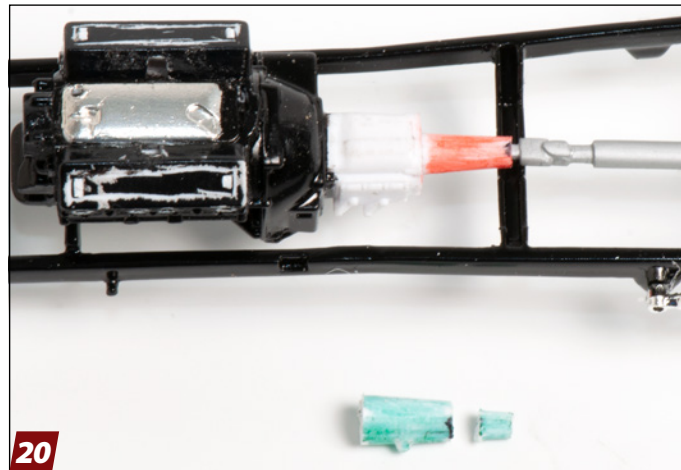
18

I considered four different possibilities for the frame of my Model T hot rod. Any except the Ed Roth "Tweedy Pie" would have worked OK, but, in the end, I decided on the MPC Switchers 1925 Model T Z'ed frame.



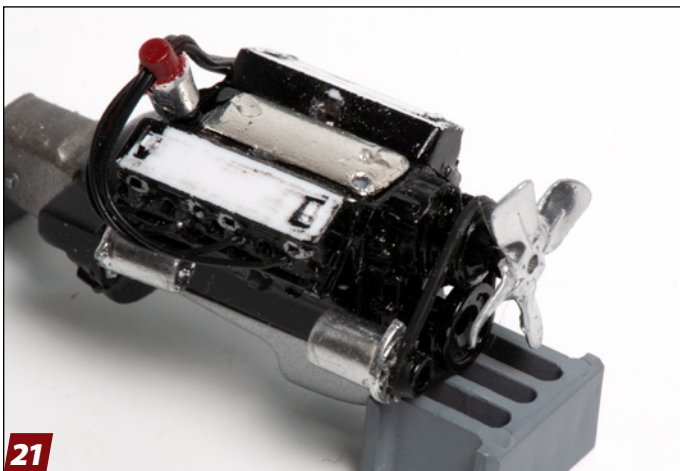
19

The tail-shaft extension on the Revell 1957 Ford Custom 300 Y-block engine/transmission was too long for the Switchers chassis. Instead of relocating the frame's crossmember, I removed the front and rear portion of the tail shaft (green) and retained the center section (red).



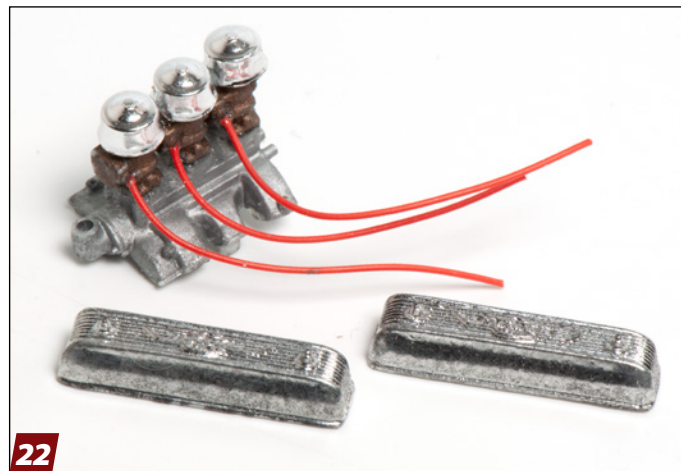
20

With the revised engine and transmission mocked up on the MPC Switchers chassis, everything aligned properly with the location of the frame's transmission mount. The tail shaft mated properly to the MPC Switchers torque tube.



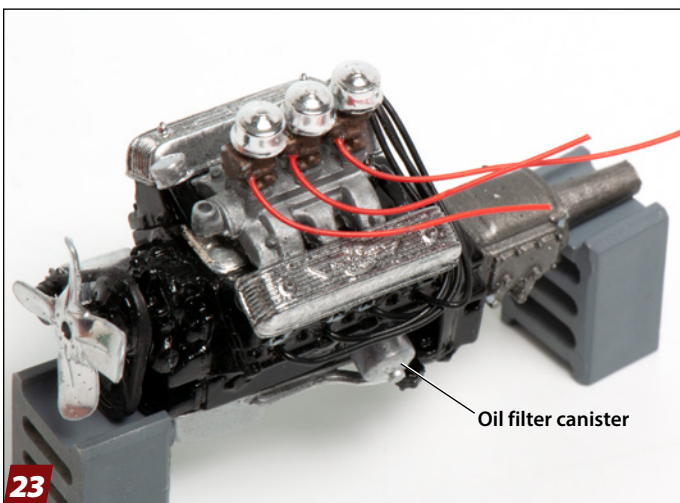
21

The Valley Cover (the molded plate that covers the top center of the engine block) was finished after the engine block halves were joined and then painted Molotow Liquid Chrome. The Vertex-style magneto should be mounted angled to the passenger side of the engine block.



22

Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland came to the rescue with the popular tri-carb intake layout and ribbed valve covers. The polished appearance was achieved with Alclad II Chrome (No. ALC-107) over gloss black enamel.



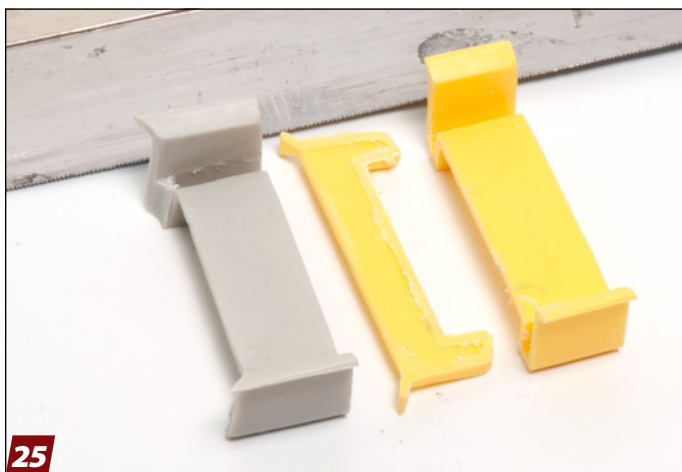
23

With ignition wires and fuel lines run, the completed tri-carb Y-block engine awaits installation into the MPC Switchers frame. The outward-facing oil filter canister had to be shortened slightly to fit inside the relatively narrow width of frame rails.



24

The MPC 1925 Model T Switchers frame rails had sink marks that required filling and sanding, and the fit of the suspension parts was somewhat sloppy compared to modern kits. I sourced the whitewall tires and chrome wheels from an AMT/Ertl Ala-Kart kit.



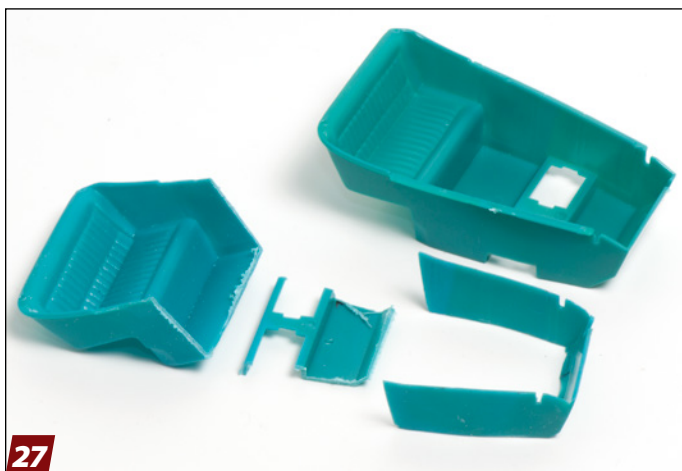
25

The Switchers '70s "Fad T" pickup bed was too short; I wanted a longer bed reminiscent of the early 1960s. I used the pickup-bed parts from two of the MPC Switchers kits, removed the very front edge of the second bed (yellow), and glued the remaining pieces together.



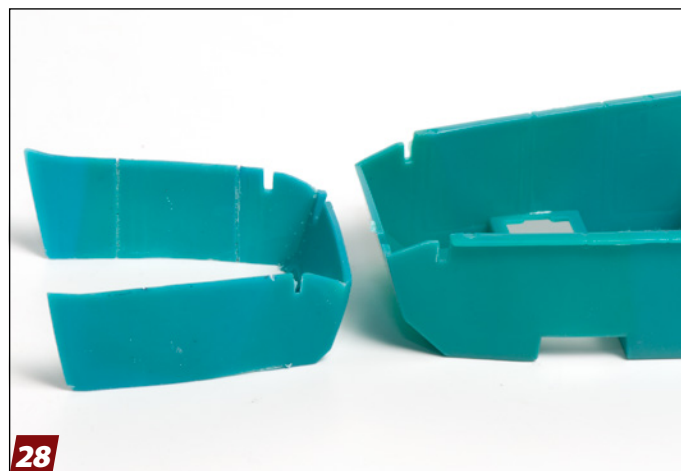
26

For the early-'60s candy red, I sprayed a Testors 1971 AMC Sterling Silver base coat. Single coats of Tamiya Clear Orange (No. TS-73) and Clear Red (No. TS-74) went over it, then again. Final coats were clear red until I achieved the desired candy red. I finished with Mr. Super Clear Gloss.



27

I based the my hot rod's interior on the interior bucket from the Revell 1927 Model T touring kit (top right). I removed the rear seat area and the entire floorboard, leaving the forward interior side panels and toe board area (lower right).



28

This is a side view of the new interior (left) compared to the unmodified kit part (right). Note I've trimmed a portion of the sidewall at both the top and bottom. I repeatedly test-fit it on the mocked-up frame and body until the fit was perfect.



29

I engraved new door lines into the side panels, applied Tamiya putty, and sanded the panels smooth. Evergreen V-groove styrene sheet (No. 2060) added for new side appliques matched the Revell 1929 Model A hot rod roadster kit's bench seat tuck'n'roll upholstery pattern.



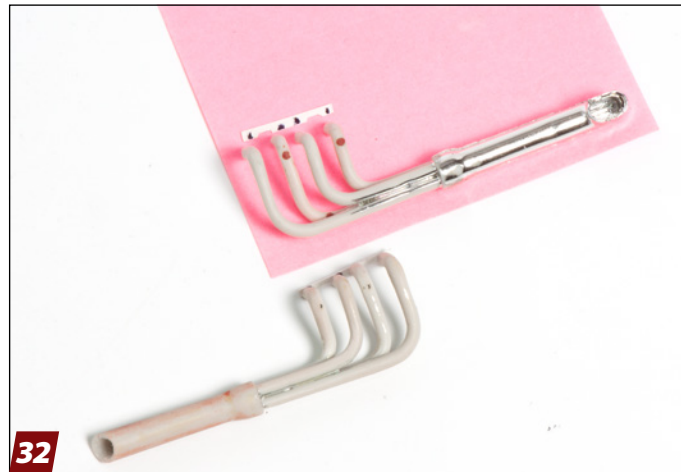
30

The seat needed some finessing, but the interior fits and looks the part, even before paint. By the early 1960s, white hot-rod interior upholstery was still in style, but all-black upholstery was becoming more popular.



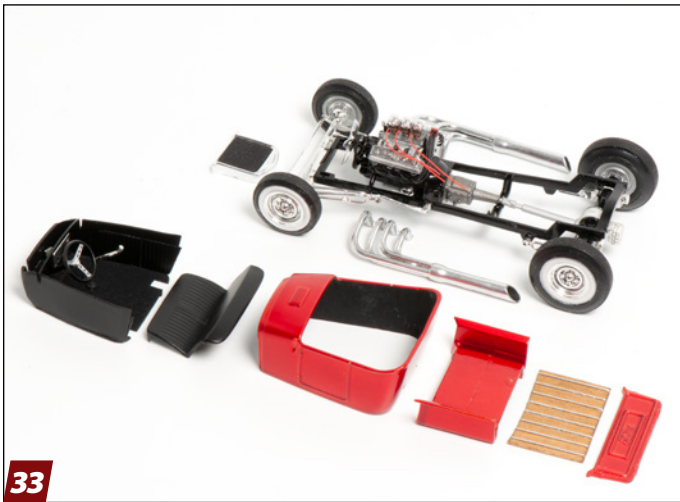
31

The interior parts after a session with Tamiya Semigloss Black (No. TS-29) paint. I made a new floorboard from styrene sheet and flocked it (lower left). The instrument panel came from a Brian Borden Revell 1927 Model T touring kit; I made the gauge lenses from five-minute epoxy.



32

For side-pipe exhausts, I took parts from a Switchers kit. I made two exhaust gaskets from styrene sheet (top center) and gently bent the tops of the center header pipes to match. I removed the pipe ends and airbrushed two coats of Alclad II Chrome over gloss black enamel.



33

Here are the subassemblies before final assembly. Note the real wood pickup bed floor made from model railroad ribbed planks treated with mahogany wood stain followed by several coats of gloss clear. I finished with narrow strips of Bare-Metal Foil applied to the ribs for cargo skids.



FINAL THOUGHTS

THE COMPLETED APPEARANCE will instantly jog the memories of those who lived back in the early 1960s, while true Model T aficionados will notice the comparatively streamlined 1927 Model T body compared to the far more common 1923-25 T-bucket. Note the subtle forward-tilting rake and stance. The T-bucket hot-rod design places the engine, interior, and pickup-bed floor out in the open for all to see, rewarding extra effort to detail these areas. **FSM**

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