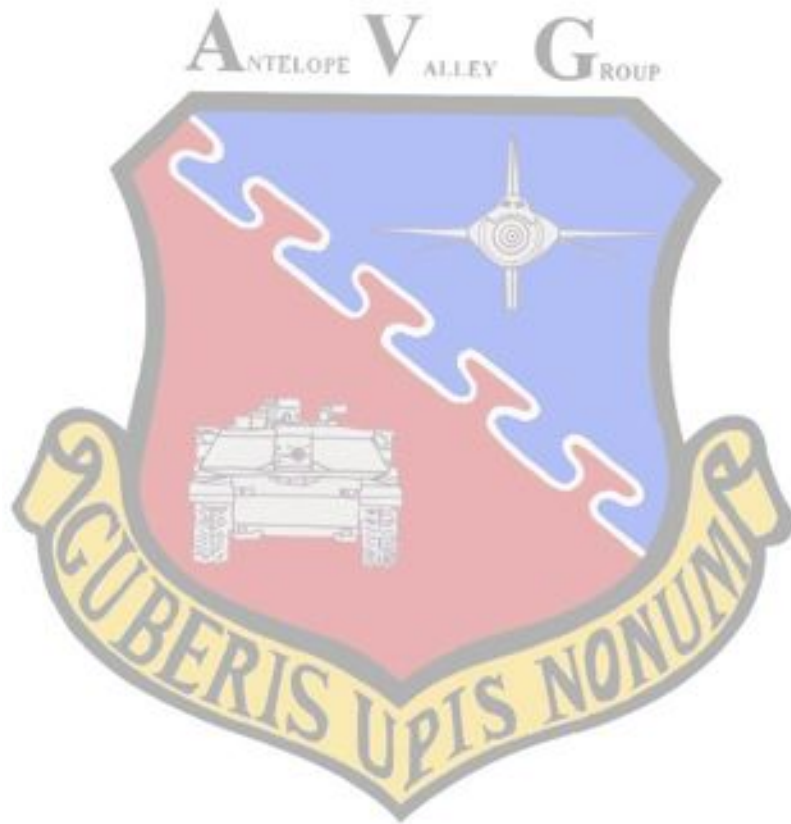


The Smoking Hole

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2017 Club Officers

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Club News and Business

NEXT MEETING SEPTEMBER 16 2017, 1:00 PM AT ROSAMOND LIBRARY

August General Meeting Notes:

At the August meeting, primary topics were contest discussion and Prez Tracy and VP Jim's report on their trip to the IPMS Nationals

Nats Report

Jim and Tracy both attended the Nats in Omaha this year. Jim reported there were 740 entrants, with a total of 2700+ entered models!

Both Tracy and Jim participated in judging. A couple of items of interest: There is a big emphasis on "consistency of effort" at the National level. That is, the model should be consistent overall – if the cockpit is highly detailed, the gear wells should be also. If the model is weathered on the upper surfaces, it should be weathered on the undersurfaces also. Additionally, modelers are given the benefit of the doubt on missing or broken parts, that is, it does not need to be noted on the entry sheet that the model was broken in transit.

Jim got a couple clarifications on "out-of-the-box" rules. First, photocopy seatbelts are acceptable, as long as they are paper. Therefore, you can make a color photocopy of Eduard pre-painted photoetch belts and use them on your OOB build. Second clarification – a basic base is acceptable for OOB ship models.

Couple more items of interest. Clubs can have a display table at the Nats. Cost is \$25, which is refundable. AVG sponsored a Nats category, Category 105C, "Small aircraft: Single Engine, Prop, Turboprop, or Glider, 1/72 (not exceeding 8.5" length or span), Inline-Other"



Jim took 2 second place trophies. Congrats!

Contest Discussion

Contest discussion was relatively short. Prez Tracy did not have any updates to sponsorship by other IPMS chapters or hobby shops.

The September meeting is the last chance for AVG members to sponsor a category. Cost is \$45 per category. Please get payment to Niilo at the meeting.

VP Jim reported that IPMS Orange County is running our contest flyer in their latest newsletter. With E-board approval, Robby purchased a contest banner for the Regional. While it was originally proposed that this be a banner unique to the Regional, Robby purchased a generic contest banner. We may use it to replace our existing contest banner.



New Members

We have 2 new members, Rich Elersich and his son, Robert. Welcome to AVG!

2016 Meeting Schedule

Primary	Activities	Refreshments	Demo	Review
21 Jan	Member Dues Collected			
18 Feb	Project Build Meeting	Rich M. / Steve		
18 Mar		Matt/Niilo		
15 Apr	In-House Contest "6 Day War"	Mike O. / Rick		
20 May		Rich / Jay		
17 June		Jim /Joe	"Things Under Wings – ARM-US"	
16 July	In-House Contest "Jurassic Plastic"	Steve S. / Robby		
19 Aug		Frank / Stephen		
16 Sept		Bill P. / Tracy		
21 Oct		David / Henry		
28 Oct	2017 Desert Classic			
18 Nov	2018 Club Officer Nominations			
16 Dec	Christmas Potluck Gift Exchange 2018 Officer Elections	Everyone!		

The Tool Crib

Couple club members brought in some neat stuff.

Thatchweave Products sandbags:



These are extremely cool! Real cloth miniature sandbags. Fill them with real sand (or other suitable material). These will really take your armor dios to the next level - can't get much more realistic. Jim picked these up at the Nats and said the ladies were sewing them there on site.

Costal Kits bases:



Luis brought in a selection of Costal Kits bases. These are printed cardboard bases in various scales and styles (aircraft ramps, water for ships, even a launching ramp for seaplanes). Look really nice and pretty reasonably priced. Available from Sprue Brothers or directly from Costal Kits (<http://www.coastalkits.co.uk/>).

Club Demos

If you'd like to do a demo for the club, let me know and I'll put you on the calendar.

Member Show and Tell



Name:

Luis Toledo

Time To Build:

3 months

Kit & Scale:

Academy AH-64A "Gray Camo"

1/48th scale

Aftermarket Items:

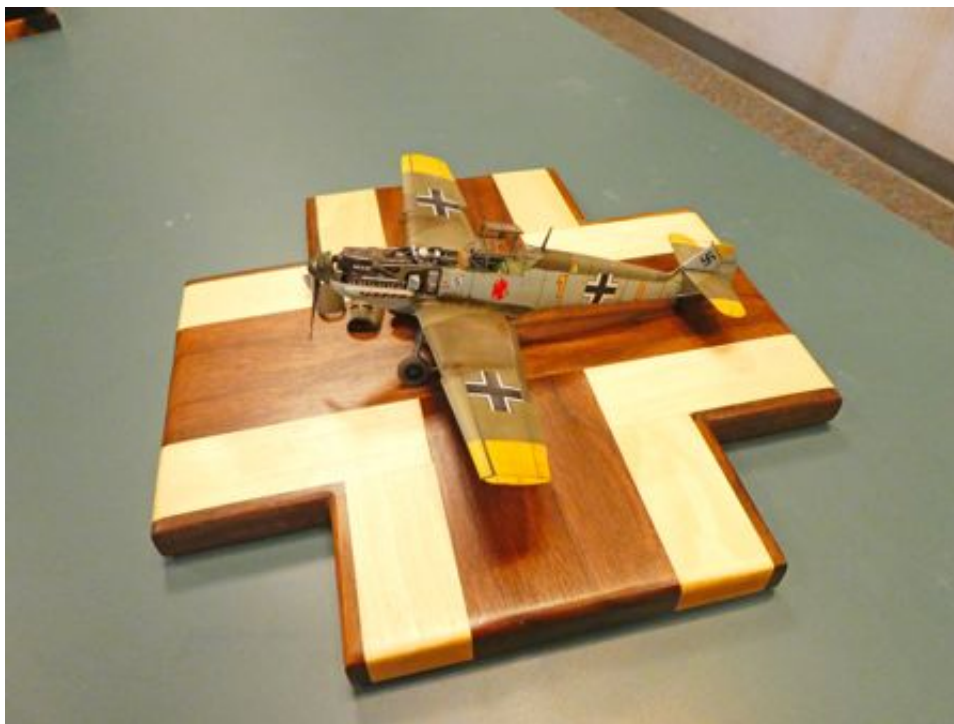
OOB

Paints Used:

Ammo Paints

Comments:

Nostalgic build. This was the very first I built 5 years ago. Not for beginners!



Name:

Tracy Ackret

Time To Build:

80 hours

Kit & Scale:

Eduard Bf-109E-4

1/48th scale

Aftermarket Items:

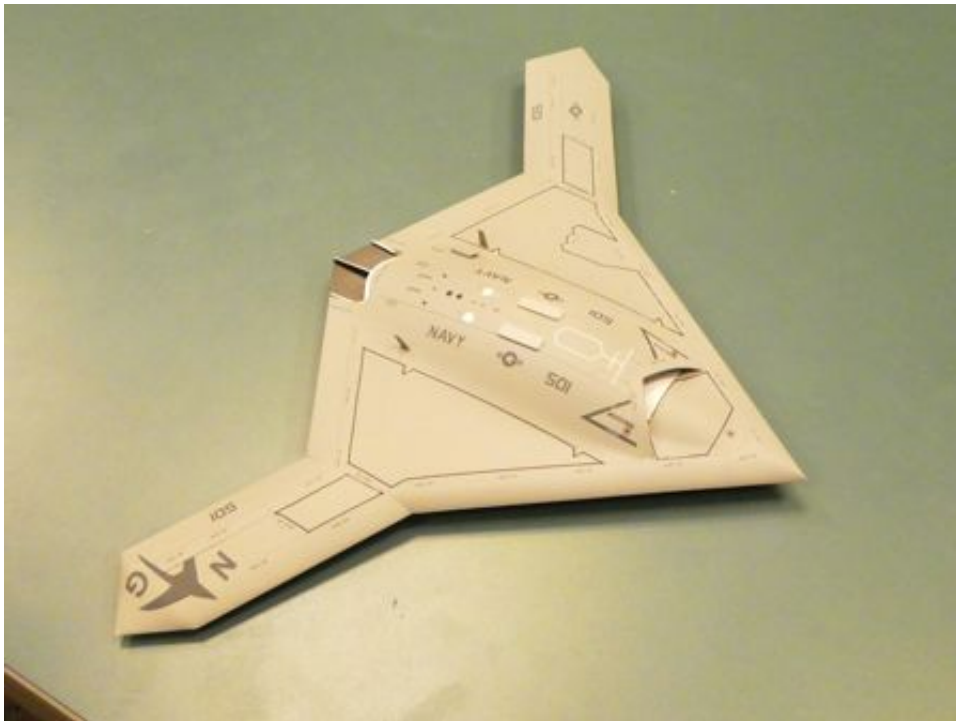
Aeromaster decals
Master Model gun barrels
Ultracast resin wheels
PE cockpit details

Paints Used:

Mig Ammo paints and effects

Comments:

Piloted by Oblt. Gerhardt Schopfel.
While flying this aircraft, Schopfel
shot down 4 Hurricanes of 501 Sqn.
Near Canterbury in August 1940. He
claimed 2 Hurricanes at Dunkirk
flying this aircraft.



Name:

David Newman

Time To Build:

1 month

Kit & Scale:

Platz X-47B

1/72nd scale

Aftermarket Items:

None

Paints Used:

Testors Neutral Gray, Tamiya Clear Flat

Comments:



Name:

Mike Otis

Time To Build:

1 month

Kit & Scale:

Hobby Boss St. Chamond French Tank

1/35th scale

Aftermarket Items:

Paints Used:

Tamiya XF- Red Brown, NATO Green
Medium Blue, Desert Yellow.
Used sharp point Sharpie marker for
outline.

Comments:

Great kit – good solid fit on very
detailed running gear. Snap-together
tracks went together well and stayed
together.



Name:

Niilo Lund

Time To Build:

85 hours over 3 months

Kit & Scale:

Aurora TFX F-111A

1/48th scale

Aftermarket Items:

None

Paints Used:

Tamiya Haze Gray, Light Gray, Flat White, Flat Black
 Model Master Green Zinc Chromate,
 Olive Drab
 Self-mixed Flesh

Comments:

Time consuming, detailed instructions, parts fit needed trim and sanding (no putty). Decal very old, had to peel, not slide off.

Recommendation: Fun build. Moving wings and gear.



Name:

Rich Ribaudo

Time To Build:

Approx 30 hours

Kit & Scale:

Airfix Spitfire Mk.Vb,

1/48th scale

Aftermarket Items:

None

Paints Used:

Model Master Oil Enamels. Winsor-Newton artist oils for washes and weathering. Pastels for exhaust burns.

Comments:

To paraphrase the Airfix instruction sheet...

"The Supermarine Spitfire Mk.Vb was the most widely produced variant of the Mk.V Spitfires. It entered RAF service in early 1941 and incorporated a number of improvements over earlier Spitfires including 2 20mm cannons in the "B Wing", four .303 Browning machine guns, metal covered ailerons, fishtail exhaust, armoured windscreen, deeper oil cooler and better visibility through the improved Malcom Hood. While out-performed by enemy fighters over Europe the Spitfire ZMk.Vb was used to great effect over the



Medeterranian defending the beleaguered island of Malta.”

This kit was intended as a “therapy build” between the fiddly KittyHawk XF5U and the Roden ATL-98 Carvair, both of which demanded extra effort. I’m pleased to report that the Airfix Spitfire Mk.Vb didn’t have a heavy level of drama. Right from the box there is plenty of detail. Even the cockpit is appointed with a few things you would expect to see from resin aftermarket sources. The molding is crisp, clean and panel lines are appropriate for the scale. Decals are a bit thick but behaved well when set with a 50/50 mix of Future and distilled water.

The model I built used the kit markings for Pilot Officer Robert Wendell McNair, D.F.C, of the Royal Canadian Air Force, in Malta, March 1942. Malta Spitfires have a mysterious background regarding their colors. Some were an unidentified shade of blue (painted on the aircraft carriers delivering them to Malta) and some were painted after delivery. I was attracted to the unusual (and sketchy) gray and earth comouflage scheme. The gray, applied over the factory color of RAF Dark Green, was reportedly concocted of locally available/applied gray paint on Malta so I had no definite shade to copy. A friend of mine, Dave Jones, did a fair amount of research into the color mystery. Dave found a source that said a close match was 7 parts Dark Sea Gray to 1 part Night Black. I used that mix, varying the tones to simulate bleaching from the intense Malta sun. Also, the Sky undersides were repainted with a light blue.

I wanted this to be an uncomplicated and enjoyable build, so to keep things simple I decided to use the kit decals and no



aftermarket items. According to our members that attended the 2017 nationals, this model meets all the IPMS Out of the Box rules.

I did make a few improvements to the appearance of the model over the “as molded” condition.

- Drilled out the exhaust manifolds

- Drilled out the cannon barrels

- Drilled out the lightening holes in the cockpit bulkheads

- Repositioned the rudder to give it a bit more of a candid pose (the kit provides it as a separate part)

- Eliminated the oversized cowl fasteners and restored them with a jeweler’s beading tool

- Used Mike Grant individual instrument decals instead of the kit’s single panel decal

- Added a paper seat harness; I made a photocopy of an Eduard color harness and cut it to shape

All these improvements added just an hour and a half to accomplish and they make a big difference.

I encountered some minor fit issues that required a bit of shaping, filler and ingenuity to get a perfect fit.

- Spinner back plate (part C 6) was slightly over sized

- Top forward fuselage (part D 33) needed internal relieving where it fits over the instrument panel

- Some file and putty work where the cannons attach to the fuselage was needed

- Putty and polishing was required on the starboard wing root and upper forward fuselage

- Hokey landing gear attachment

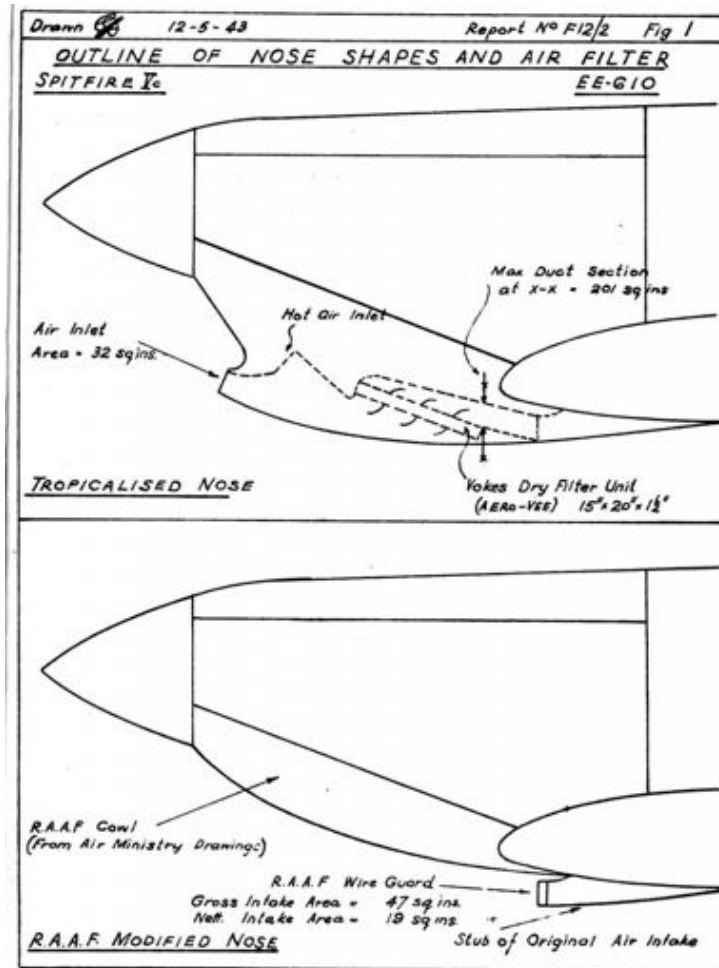


method required careful alignment and cementing (see below)

But here again, less than two hours were spent overcoming most of these issues.

My only *major* gripe with this kit is the method of attaching the landing gear. Airfix made the gear struts separate from the trunnion pieces. The trunnions sit between a pair of wing spars that are sandwiched between the upper & lower wing halves. I'm sure the idea was to achieve a look that replicates the real trunnion installation (and it does), as opposed to the conventional "plug the gear strut in a socket" method that most models employ. The problem here is that only 1/16" of the trunnion protrudes from the lower wing. The "D" shaped mating point on the strut is equally small. The trunnions do not positively lock into place in the spar either, making it easy to have the gear splayed at different and/or incorrect angles. Further, the contact area between the trunnion and strut is extremely tiny (less than the head of a pin), making cementing difficult. This whole arrangement makes alignment of the gear struts a considerable challenge even though the instructions provide detailed drawings and an illustration of the proper strut angles.

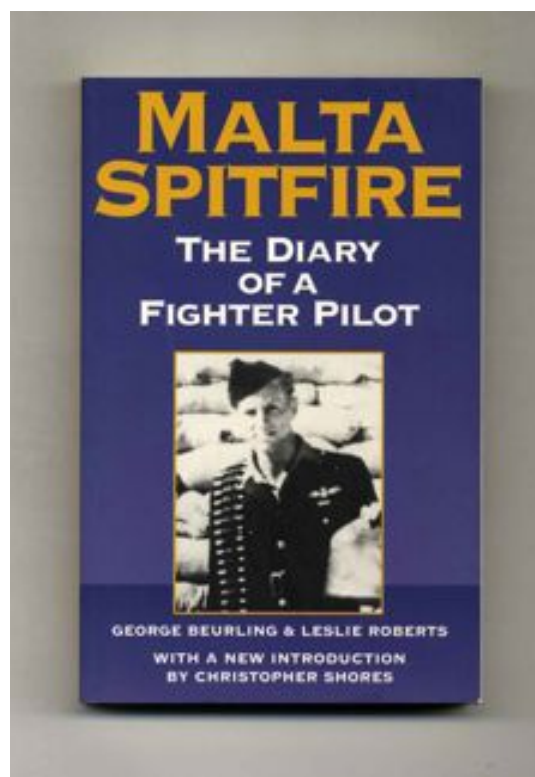
I used liquid cement on the gear struts (for a strong welded bond) and some tiny alligator clamps with flat "bills" from Radio Shack to clamp the strut to the trunnion. The clamps were close to being just right, but reworked with a file to narrow their jaws in order to fit them between the strut and edge of the wheel well. After the liquid cent cured overnight I added a drop of CA gel for good measure. If I built another one of these kits



I'd attach the struts to the trunnions before installing everything to the spar and just be very careful not to break the gear struts during the rest of the assembly. There may also be a way to shoehorn the completed strut/trunnion assembly in place after the wings are built (in other words, after painting the model) but I just followed the instruction sequence to see how everything would fit. In hindsight it was a bit lazy of me.

The Spitfire's elegant lines are not flattered by the big Vokes air filter under the nose. But I wanted to do the Earth and gray Malta camouflage scheme and the ungainly looking filter went along in the bargain. I believe the Vokes filters were ultimately removed from Spitfires serving on Malta in an effort to improve performance. I also chose to install the big slipper tank under the fuselage. Here again, these were ferry tanks and probably not used much in operations. But as this is the only Spitfire in my collection having a Vokes filter and slipper tank I'm checking the perfunctory "ugly box" box by installing them!

After completion the model got a coat of Tamiya Fine Gray primer. This stuff lays down beautifully right from the rattle can and dries quickly. After addressing a few blemishes revealed by the primer I polished the model with a cotton cloth. I then pre-shaded the panel lines with flat black. A Dark Earth and Dark gray camouflage scheme was sprayed followed by several coats of the same colors progressively lightened to give a faded appearance. I replicated photographic evidence of gray overspray from the locally applied camouflage job in a few spots as I had a photo of the plane I was



modeling. Chips and scuffs were done with a silver pencil and some dry brushing of aluminum paint. A coat of Humbrol gloss varnish gave a smooth surface for the kit decals, which were a bit thick but behaved well. After the decals were set the panel lines were washed with umber and gray oils. This was followed by a broad-brushed wash of model Master Africa Sand enamel to render an overall washed-out look. Testors flat coat toned the whole model down nicely. Stains and smudges were rendered with MiG washes and artist's pastels. Ushi Van De Rosten's fine elastic thread was used for the antenna wire.

This kit was fun to build despite the landing gear issue and a few minor fit problems. If properly painted the cockpit passes muster nicely, even with the hood and door open, and can even rival some aftermarket equipped models. I recommend this kit to modelers of moderate experience. This is only because the builder needs to be mindful of the need for extra care and fitting of a few parts during the build process, *especially* the main landing gear.

I also have the Airfix Hawker Hurricane (kit # O5127) which was released around the same time as this Spitfire. I'm anxious to have it sitting next to this Mk.Vb Spitfire in my case.

Reference Note:

I used two sources of reference for this build that I recommend to anyone interested in learning about the challenging conditions endured by the combatants and residents of Malta. The first is Osprey Aircraft of the Aces #83 "*Malta Spitfire Aces*" by Steve Nichols and the second is

	<p><i>“Malta Spitfire: The Diary of an Ace Fighter Pilot”</i> by George Beurling and Leslie Roberts. These are great reads on their own and very useful for the modeler interested in building a Malta based Spitfire. Good deals on these can be found on Amazon and eBay.</p>
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Calendar

09/17/2017	Tri-City Classic 13	Milpitas Community Center 357 E. Calaveras Blvd. Milpitas, CA
09/23/2017	REDCON 2017	Orleans Hotel and Casino 4500 W. Tropicana Ave., Las Vegas, NV
9/30/2017	OrangeCon 2017	Pavilion and Conference Center, Cal State Fullerton 800 N State College Blvd., Fullerton, CA
10/28/2017	Desert Classic XXI	Antelope Valley College Cafeteria 3041 W Ave. K, Lancaster, CA
11/12/2017	Kit Collectors Exposition and Show	Garden Grove Community Center 11300 Stanford Ave. Garden Grove, CA