



"STICKY FINGERS"

Magazine

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Peters Prattling

Next month – September – 3rd Competition Round & Battle of Britain Class

Next month is the 3rd round of our annual competition plus as it's the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, we have added another category for models which are of subjects which took part in this historical battle. Don't forget this does not just include aircraft; it can be of any subject associated with this period, e.g. RAF or Luftwaffe airfield vehicles. I would suggest that the "standard rule" of no more than 2 entries per person applies, but you can always bring along any other models you have which fit this subject.

Mick's Talk Last Month

My thanks to Mick for giving us a very interesting talk on his weathering and base building methods, as he said it's all about experimentation and finding what works for you. Much of the base building stuff comes from the railway modelling scene, the use of flexible rubber moulds to make rocks and also bags of flock and ballast for grass and pebbles etc are all good tips for those that want to put their models on a base. It certainly gave me a few ideas and all I need now is some time to put them into practice, which I might be getting, see Home Front later.

Much of the weathering techniques I have heard about or seen either Mick or others explain before but it's never a bad idea to see how people undertake this "black art". This topic is quite subjective, some people prefer to have a "realistic" finish based on photos of the real thing and thus replicating what they see there, others go for a more "artistic" finish where all panel lines are outlined and the paint is faded in colour towards the centre of the panels (sometimes giving a very patchwork or quilt looking effect to my eyes at least), which is not necessarily accurate but can look pleasing, whilst others prefer not to have any at all.

Home Front

Nothing much to report for me, unlike Robin's update later, I have let a much less interesting month apart from some earth shattering news. We were called into a meeting a few Tuesdays ago and were told that the firm were outsourcing pretty much all of its IT services to an Indian company and this meeting was a warning that major redundancies are coming. So after 20 years of contented service I have been trying to get my head around the news. I think I'm getting used to the idea but if I seem more distracted than usual please excuse me. Timescale is the 1st December but as yet no news on what the redundancy package is likely to be. So far I'm determined to stick it out to find out what it will be, we are all hoping it will be more generous than the statutory minimum, after that the search for work will start, thankfully I'm in a financial position where I feel able to not rush into the next phase. All being well this won't have any effect on my ability to stay as club secretary or plans for next years Southern Expo and decals. I'm not expecting any sympathy as this sort of situation is part and parcel of working life now, just for me it's a bit of an upheaval as I've not changed jobs for so long.



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Forthcoming Shows in 2010

Shows with **highlight** have been booked for us to attend. If you wish to attend any of the shows with the club stand please let me know so I can attempt to book space for the club.

2010	
4th & 5th September (Saturday & Sunday)	Medway Model show. REME Museum, Gillingham, Kent Booking sent off but not confirmed yet.
26th September (Sunday)	Brampton show - Burgess Hall, St Ives, Cambs, PE27 6WU
2nd October (Saturday)	IPMS Abingdon, Larkmead School, Farrington Road, Abingdon OX14 1RF
23rd October (Saturday)	IPMS Glasgow wish to announce Glasgow Model Fest 2010 to be held at the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow
13th & 14th November	Scale Modelworld - Telford

Peter

Robins Ruminations

Greetings from sunny East Sussex, which is where I am writing this month's article for Sticky Fingers. It's a bit of a strange holiday for us this year due to my wife's broken coccyx. Where we would have been going out to places and enjoying the local pub's fare, we have been rather tied to the cottage. Still as you can see from the image below, it's still a lot nicer looking over the lap-tops screen out of the window of the farm cottage than at home in Harold Hill.





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Still, things were not all quite and housebound. My son was off to America while I was away on holiday and guess what? "Dad, could you take me to Gatwick?" Although my first and last reaction was "no", my Wife said "of course your father will, no problem". So I came home late one evening, to find my son still attempting to complete his packing, the problem was that he was four kilos overweight. On being told he couldn't cut down on anything else, I asked about his hand luggage. I was told that it was complete and nothing more could fit in the bag. When I saw the hand luggage my Son was taking I didn't know whether to laugh or cry, he had a small bag with a couple of books in it. A few questions soon revealed that he had a ten kilo hand luggage allowance within a standard size bag. I sweetly enquired why he didn't use a larger bag and put his excess weight in it? The answer was "I didn't think of that", scary and I was letting him out of the country?

So I eventually crashed out, got up at 04:15 and took Peter to the airport. On arrival to the airport my Son checked the departures board, Aer Lingus, departure area "B". We walk into the booking-in hall, area "A" was like a bear pit, area "C" absolutely chock-a-block, area "B", no sign of at all. We walked about half way through the hall before we spotted a small "B" on the far wall, getting there we couldn't see any check-in counter at all, only the special assistance counter. This of course set me off, "perhaps being Aer Lingus Son, the crew and passengers need help finding the plane?" We finally saw an A4 sized notice on a support post with an arrow saying that the Aer Lingus check-in was this way, pointing towards a set of doors. We gingerly opened the doors only to see a long downward slope, no people at all, deathly silent. In for a penny, in for a pound, down the slope we went, on reaching the bottom we turned the corner and at the furthest end of a line of deserted check-ins, two staff members. LIFE! My Son checked-in and we made our way back up the slope, only to meet two equally concerned looking would-be passengers coming down towards us. I asked my Son if he would like me to hang around for a while to spin the prop of his plane, after all I had done for him; he said a naughty word to me! However after a cup of coffee, I was back on the farm by 09:00 so it didn't really inconvenience me too much and after the hand luggage episode, at least I knew he had made the plane.

My wife sometime criticises me for writing my articles and not including any modelling at all, so to appease she who must be obeyed, the modelling bit now follows. Due to the sunny, hot weather I have escaped outside to the back garden to tap out this article on the laptop under the shade of the apple trees with a cup of tea and piece of cake, very civilised.



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With limited options of going out and about on holiday, I took a couple of my part built aircraft with me to move along a bit. Things, as ever didn't go to plan when after "washing" the panel lines and "oil staining" the nose area I managed to let one drip of the acetone free brush cleaner fall on the wing. Within a heartbeat it had stripped the decal and two layers of paint, ARGGGH! One step forward and two steps back!

While on holiday I called into the "local" model shop in Uckfield, "The Hobby Box". This shop mainly caters for railway and R/C aircraft modellers, but also stocks a fair number of plastic models. I like this type of shop as it offers a very interesting crossover of bits and pieces between the different modelling interests. One particular item I saw and immediately purchased was a small mat for R/C car racers, the idea being that when the car is opened up for maintenance / battery change where do you put the nuts, bolts and screws so you don't lose them? The mat is "sticky" and will easily hold any small part and release it without leaving any sticky residue. I immediately thought of all those small parts of plastic or etched metal I had lost and realised that this item was just what I needed and for only £4.99. If it gets dusty or dirty, you simply wash it off to make it sticky again, excellent value.

Also while in the shop I purchased the new-ish Airfix 1/48th Messerschmitt 109E, and a very nice kit it is. The kit is cleanly moulded in a light gray plastic with etched panel lines and the surface has a very slight sand-blasted texture on the two spruces. The thin, clear parts include rounded, square, armoured and Galland telescope canopy parts on a separately bagged spruce. There are three decal options, all for aircraft that took part in Battle of Britain; these decals appear thin and well printed. The really good thing I like about this kit are the build options that it gives you. Unlike the Tamiya and Hasegawa offerings, the Airfix kit give you options to build an E-1, E-3, and E-4/7 as well as Tropical options, also the leading edge slats, flaps, ailerons, rudder and elevators can all be positioned separately. Included in the parts are an auxiliary fuel tank, 250Kg and 500Kg bombs with their carriers and unusually a carrier for four 50Kg bombs, again lots of options on offer. A nice touch, love them or hate them, "weighted" tyres. The only two tiny faults I can see with the kit are the very slight depressions on the outside of the cockpit area due to shrinkage and the shape of the propeller blades, but that could be just me.



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So what do you get for your money? Well I think the Hasegawa models of the 109's are more "delicate" and refined and the Tamiya kits more "idiot proof" in their parts layout and construction. However for your £13.95 you get a very good workman-like kit that can make almost all the Me 109 "E" variants with lots of weapons options all in one kit, unlike the Tamiya and Hasegawa kits where you have to buy individual options, kit by kit. The Airfix kit is by no mean perfect or definitive, but is good value for money and I look forward to building this kit.

My Official hat is now on.....

I'm sure that all those club members present at the last meeting will join me in thanking Mick Pitts for his interesting talk on the weathering effects he uses on his models. Mick's thoughts and ideas on bases and base making were very interesting and food for thought, so let's see some new bases in the next few competitions please gentleman.

Robin

Wrighty's References

The U-Boat Sunk by its Namesake

The U.461 was no ordinary U-Boat; she was a type XIV tanker submarine, built by Deutsche Werke of Kiel, launched in November 1941. These tanker/supply boats, of which only 10 were built out of the 14 planned, were very effective at replenishing standard type 7c attack U-Boats in the Atlantic, thus extending their patrol periods. They were known as Milchkuhe (Milk Cows).

Note: Further reading "The Milk Cows, U-Boat Tankers 1941/45", published by Pen and Sword Co. A very interesting story of all 10 operational boats, all of which were lost to enemy action between 1942-44. The boats were numbered U.459 to U.464 inclusive and U.487 to U.490 inclusive.

However we are only concerned here with U.461, who was involved in the greatest co-incidence of W.W.II, when she was sunk by her own namesake, aircraft "U" of No.461 Sq R.A.A.F.

U.461, as part of 10 U-Flotille, carried out 3 patrols from St Nazaire (France) in North and Central Atlantic between June and December 1942 under the command of K.Kapt Wolf Stiebler, a further 3 patrols were made from St Nazaire and Bordeaux as part of 10 & 12 Flotille between Feb & July 1943. U.461's final patrol began on 27/7/43 sailing across the Bay of Biscay in company with U.462 (Milk Cow) and U.504 a standard Type 7c boat. En-route to the Cape Verde Islands (West of Freetown) to refuel U-Boats bound for the Indian Ocean. They arrived in V formation with 461 the command boat leading, 504 to port and 462 to starboard, A/A gunners stood nearby with plenty of ammo to fight their way across the Bay. Their torpedo boat escorts left them on the 29/7/43, a signal sent to this effect was sent by "enigma" to Group West HQ, "Bad move", it was intercepted by the Allies and action duly taken, patrol aircraft were ordered out to locate the 3 boats. The RNs 2nd Support Group, anti-submarine frigates were alerted and they proceeded to the given position of the enemy.

The attack sequence then employed by the Allies shows how well co-ordinated, search find and kill tactics had been refined from the haphazard efforts of earlier days. It is worth looking at the sequence of events. On the 30/7/43 the first sighting 150NM off Cape Ortegal (Portugal) was made around 10am by a 53 Sq Long Range Liberator from Cornwall (5 hours into its patrol), whence it shadowed the 3 boats. Stiebler, the captain of U.461, sent a message "being shadowed" another mistake, as the 2nd Frigate S.G. were able to pinpoint the enemy position from the transmission. Soon after the 2nd SG sighted the 3 U-boats on the surface. Almost at once a 228 Sq Sunderland from Cornwall arrived. Opposed by 2 aircraft, Stiebler was worried and sent a further signal requesting air support. Now with 2 aircraft shadowing it was difficult for all 3 boats to dive successfully, the boats then formed a defensive A/A circle.

Now a 210 Sq Catalina flying boat arrives, Stiebler was ready to fight it out on the surface, yet another message was sent to HQ, but the 2nd SG were closing in, the Catalina peeled off to meet the 2nd SG and guide them in. Next to arrive was a Halifax of 502 Sq from Cornwall, who was damaged by A/A fire, but a 2nd Halifax made 3 bombing runs that left U.462 slowly sinking, the boat scuttled and the crew abandoned ship, 3 were killed, but 64 were picked up as POWs.



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Around the same time the 53 Sq Liberator attacked U.504, but he was badly damaged by A/A fire and left the scene to get to neutral Portugal where he was interned. A Liberator from 19 USAAF Sq replaced him. By now U.504 was under intense fire from the 2nd SG ships, the Capt, Kpt/Lt Vowe ordered diving stations, constructive combined depth charge attacks during the next few hours saw the end for U.504, lost with all hands, 53 killed.

U.461 now stood alone, Stiebler had an A/A battle with the 19 & 52 Sq Liberators, damaging both. During the battle his namesake, Sunderland aircraft "U" of 461 Sq RAAF crept into position and delivered 7 depth charges on the boat in a low level attack sinking her, some men 15 including Stiebler escaped into the sea, but 54 others were killed. The Sunderland dropped a dingy for the survivors, who were picked up by the 2nd SG. The Sunderland skipper Flt/Lt Marrows was awarded the DFC for the sinking that heralded a major success for the Allies through air and sea co-operation and aided by Enigma code breakers at Bletchley Park. It also heralded the end for U-boats to fight it out on the surface, for them life would now be extremely difficult.

Technical Details

Aircraft		Command	Base	Sq Code Letters
53 Sq	Liberator	Coastal Command	St Eval (Cornwall)	No code
210 Sq	Catalina	Coastal Command	Hamworthy (Dorset)	DA
228 Sq	Sunderland	Coastal Command	Pembroke Docks	DQ not used 7/43
461 Sq RAAF	Sunderland	Coastal Command	Pembroke Docks	UT not used 7/43
502 Sq	Halifax	Coastal Command	St Eval (Cornwall)	YG not used 7/43
19 Sq	Liberator	USAAF Marine		Unknown

Ships

2nd Support Group ASW

HMS Woodpecker			Pennant No. U.08
HMS Wild Goose		Black Swan Class Frigates (1350 tons)	Pennant No. U.28
HMS Wren			Pennant No. U.45
HMS Kite		Modified Black Swan	Pennant No. U.87

U=Boats

	Date	Position	Lat	Long	Capt
U.461	Sunk 30/7/43	NW Cape Ortegal	45.42N	11.0W	K Kpt Stiebler
U.462			45.42N	11.0W	K Kpt Vowe
U.504			45.33N	10.47W	K Kpt Luie

Sources

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Warships of WW.2 Part 3 Frigates by HT Lenton, published Ian Allan. 1962
U-Boat Operations of 2nd WW by Ken Wynn, published Chatham Publishing. 1997
Britain at War Magazine, Issue 32, December 2009

Alan